



FROM THE PROJECTED TO THE TRANSMITTED IMAGE: THE 2.0 CONSTRUCTION OF TOURIST DESTINATION IMAGE AND IDENTITY IN CATALONIA

Estela Mariné Roig

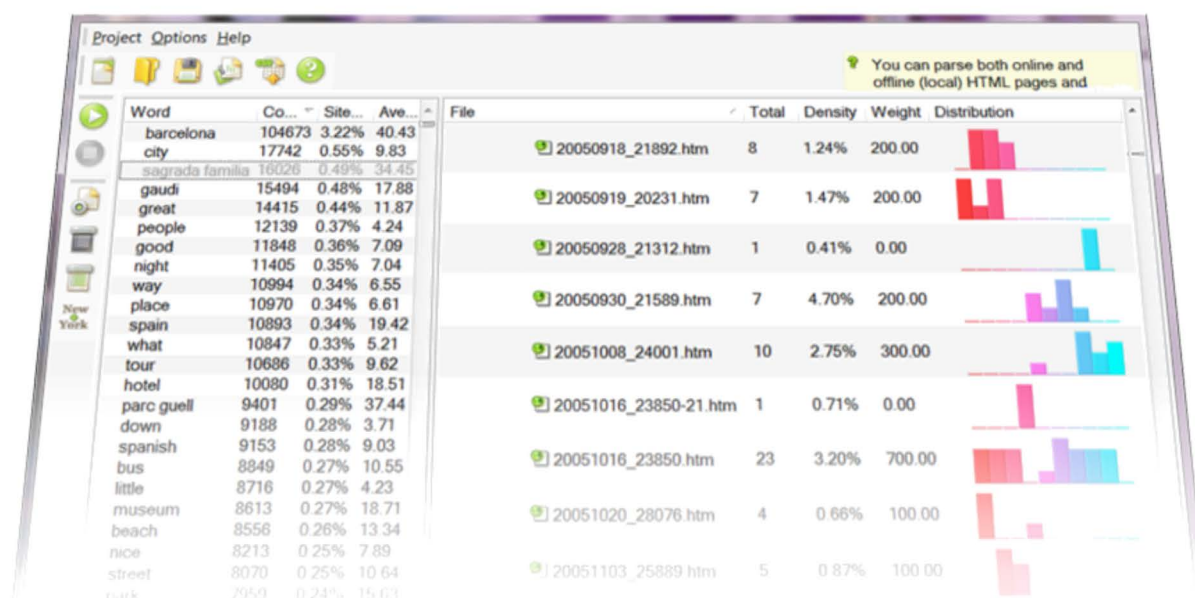
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Estela Mariné Roig



**From the projected to
the transmitted image:**

**The 2.0 construction of tourist destination
image and identity in Catalonia**

DOCTORAL THESIS

Supervised by Prof. Dr. Salvador Anton Clavé



Estela Mariné Roig

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THE 2.0 CONSTRUCTION OF TOURIST DESTINATION IMAGE AND IDENTITY IN CATALONIA

DOCTORAL THESIS

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Geography Department

Research group on territorial analysis and tourism studies (GRATET)



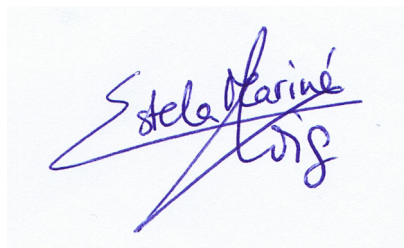
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DECLARATION

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Estela Mariné Roig
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FAIG CONSTAR que aquest treball, titulat "From the Projected to the Transmitted Image: The 2.0 Construction of Tourist Destination Image and Identity in Catalonia", que presenta Estela Mariné Roig per a l'obtenció del títol de Doctor, ha estat realitzat sota la meua direcció al Departament de Geografia d'aquesta universitat i que apleix els requeriments per poder optar a Menció Europea.

Tarragona, 19 de maig de 2013

El director de la tesi doctoral

Dr. Salvador Anton Clavé

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Professor Dr. Salvador Anton Clavé, for his helpful advice, guidance, dedication, teachings and support throughout these years. I would also like to thank the members of the GRATET (Research Group on Spatial Analysis and Tourism Studies)* and other URV scholars for their support and advice. In addition, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Isabel Cortés and all of the other scholars of the Christel Dehaan Tourism and Travel Research Institute of Nottingham University who counselled me during my PhD internship abroad.

Special thanks to Esteve Mariné Gallisà for his expert Information Technology support and advice throughout this thesis.

Thanks also to my family, my father, mother and sister, and my friends for their permanent backing and encouragement. Finally, many thanks to my partner Nikos for his unconditional support, patience and faith in me.

* The research that this PhD is based on is part of the following projects:

1) *Turismo, movilidad residencial y competitividad territorial. Respuestas locales a las dinámicas de cambio global.* Entidad financiadora: **Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación** CSO2011-23004/GEOG. Duración: 2012-2014

2) *Innovación territorial y modelos de desarrollo en destinos turísticos litorales. Análisis a diferentes escalas espaciales.* Entidad financiadora: **Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación** CSO2008-01699/GEOG. Duración: 2009-2011

3) *Evaluación de los efectos de los cambios en el modelo turístico español sobre los destinos turísticos litorales.* Entidad financiadora: **Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia** SEJ2005-05677/GEOG. Duración: 2005-2008

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore online projected and perceived images of a tourist destination, to assess their mutual correspondence, and to shed light on the role of online user-generated images in destination image formation. It also seeks to analyse the spatial distribution of image by tourists and the complex image identity issues concerning a destination. To achieve this, online image sources regarding the case study of Catalonia were analysed through massive computerized quantitative content analysis of some 25,000 travel blog and review entries (perceived image) and around 3,000 official tourism webpages (projected image). The results showed significant dissonance between tourists' images and official images of the destination in several aspects, notably its attraction factors and cultural identity. Tourists' destination images were found to be greatly concentrated on certain elements and spaces. Finally, this thesis proposes the concept of "transmitted image" to reflect the new central role of tourists' online images in the creation, dissemination and formation of destination image.

Keywords: tourist destination image; destination identity; online image; perceived image; projected image; transmitted image; travel blog; travel review; official tourism websites; Web 2.0; quantitative content analysis; Catalonia

RESUM

Aquesta tesi té com a objectiu el d'explorar les imatges projectades i percebudes online d'una destinació turística, examinar la seva correspondència mútua, i contribuir a aclarir el rol de les imatges online generades pels usuaris en la formació de la imatge d'una destinació. Amb aquests propòsits, es van analitzar fonts d'imatge online sobre el cas d'estudi de Catalunya a través d'una anàlisi computeritzada quantitativa de contingut massiu d'aproximadament 25.000 entrades de *travel blogs* i *travel reviews* (imatge percebuda) i aproximadament 3.000 pàgines de webs oficials (imatge projectada). Els resultats mostren que hi ha una dissonància important entre les imatges dels turistes i les imatges oficials de la destinació en diversos aspectes, notablement en els seus factors d'atracció i identitat cultural. S'ha trobat que les imatges dels turistes sobre la destinació estaven altament concentrades en certs elements i espais. Finalment, aquesta tesi proposa el concepte d' "imatge transmesa" per tal de reflectir el nou rol central de les imatges online dels turistes en la creació, disseminació i formació de la imatge d'una destinació.

Paraules clau: imatge d'una destinació turística; identitat de la destinació; imatge online; imatge percebuda; imatge projectada; imatge transmesa; blog de viatges; review de viatges; webs oficials de turisme; web 2.0; anàlisi de contingut quantitatiu; Catalunya

PUBLICATIONS DERIVED FROM THE THESIS

- Marine-Roig, E. (2009). Discussing the role of authenticity and identity in a mass tourism destination's image construction. In Christel DeHaan Tourism and Travel Research Institute (Ed.), *PhD Networking Conference "Exploring Tourism III: Issues in PhD Research"* (pp. 159-175). University of Nottingham, UK
- Marine-Roig, E. (2010). Los "Travel Blogs" como objetos de estudio de la imagen percibida de un destino [Travel Blogs as objects of study of the perceived image of a destination]. In EU Turismo de Málaga (Ed.), *TuriTec 2010. VII Congreso Nacional* (pp. 61-75). University of Malaga, Spain
- Marine-Roig, E. (2011a). The image and identity of the Catalan coast as a tourist destination in twentieth-century tourist guidebooks. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 9(2), 118-139
- Marine-Roig, E. (2011b). Innovation and identity in Barcelona's tourist image as represented by souvenirs. *Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies*, 3(2), 175-194
- Marine-Roig, E. & Anton, S. (2011). The evolution of the image of Catalan coastal destinations. In L. Prats (Ed.), *Researching Coastal & Resort Management: Cultures and histories of Tourism* (pp. 146-170). Bloomington, USA: Palibrio.
- Marine-Roig, E. (in press, accepted January 3, 2013). A webometric analysis of travel blogs and reviews hosting: the case of Catalonia. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*.

Abstract of the article in press: Today, destination-marketing organizations and researchers are increasingly focusing their attention on travel blogs and reviews due to their potential for projecting the image of a specific destination and for influencing travel behaviour and decision-making. However, the criteria used to select the websites hosting travel blogs and reviews for study are unclear and very few quantitative or demographic studies on users (bloggers and readers) have been conducted. The aim of this study is to propose a method in which webometric analysis is used to select the most suitable websites for a specific case study and to obtain information about users. The proposed webometric analysis consists of an integrated formula including visibility, popularity and size metrics. This method was used to rank eleven suitable websites for studying the case of Catalonia.

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0. INTRODUCTION

A. Aims and hypotheses

This thesis aims to explore online projected and perceived images, stressing the differential points of online image formation and assessing the correspondence between both types of images. For this purpose, Internet sources are studied in order to analyse the tourist image identity of a specific destination. Image identity, or identity within the tourist image, is understood here both as elements which generally identify the place in relation to tourist activities and uses (general attribute-based identity), and as elements of cultural identity.

This thesis also aims to shed light on the role of online user-generated content and user-transmitted image in the destination image formation process and to emphasize the capacity of influence and image dissemination they have and how this affects the destination's image formation.

In this regard, this study addresses and explores several research questions:

1. Does the image held by tourists who have visited a destination (in terms of attribute-based general identity and of cultural identity) correspond to the one officially constructed and projected by the destination? Is the image projected by the destination strong enough to influence tourists' perceived image?
2. What are the characteristics of the transmitted image by tourists online? How do they differ from the official image? How is this image related to and distributed throughout the different destinations and spaces? What is the potential to influence or the potential to disseminate information of official tourism websites and of travel blogs and reviews?

In this respect we considered two main hypotheses:

H1. The perceived image that tourists hold once they have visited a destination does not correspond to the one constructed and projected by the destination (neither in terms of general represented place identity, nor in terms of cultural identity).

H2. With the creation of user-generated content and its transmission through the social media, image perceived by tourists becomes transmitted image and the image formation circle is increasingly closed from tourist to tourist due to its great potential influence. The user-generated image online (such as in travel blogs and reviews) has a greater capacity or potential to influence than the official destination image (such as in official tourism websites).

To visualize the importance of online tourist image and especially of user-generated contents in image formation, this study lends empirical support to the proposition of Govers and Go (2003) that image formation agents need to be redefined and categorized, and incorporate the Internet (and online agents) into the continuum of the image formation processes. A new theoretical framework for tourist image is desirable in order to reflect the role of web 2.0 and the UGC in its formation and to gather the newly organized parts of the image construct. "Many agree that the majority of studies [about image] carried out to date are insufficiently theory-based, resulting in a lack of framework or solid conceptualization

(Beerli & Martin, 2004). As Krizman and Belullo (2007) note from Gallarza, Gil and Calderon's (2002) work, tourist image is difficult to define and conceptualize because of several factors: tourism products are complex and multidimensional, destination marketing involves the consumer physically moving to the behaviour scenario, there is great subjectivity when providing a tourist service, and finally tourism intangibility makes image assessment difficult as it depends on invisible elements of pre-visit selection and a pre-taste of the destination.

Therefore, one main aim of this research will be to try to shed light on the tourist image construct and its elements by building an explanatory theoretical-conceptual model that will be progressively revealed and that will take online image and the role of online user-generated image as central aspects of the contemporary image formation process. Hence, this thesis will try to build a suitable outline for contemporary tourist image formation.

This approach will attempt to be broad, interdisciplinary and feed from different theoretical frameworks. Thus, as Buck (1977) notes citing ancient Chinese philosophy, "a way of seeing is a way of not seeing" and wide-spectrum approaches are needed to better understand the reality. Sticking to a single theory or point of view may prevent the researcher from seeing other important elements or perspectives of an issue. Therefore, positive elements of different theories can be gathered.

Another important aim of this study is to research deeper into the nature of user-generated content, which are its characteristics, what image tourists express online, how they do so, and how this image relates to the different destinations and spaces.

Due to the social, cultural and economic implications of tourist images, the approach to the study of tourism is an active one. The aim is not just to analyse a certain situation, but to do so in a way that could later be used to implement specific policies and to change the possible weak points encountered concerning a specific destination. Similarly to the Approach of Caton and Almeida (2008), when talking about postcolonial theory, the importance of a theory is "what it allows people to see, to question, and ultimately, change". Therefore we intend to analyse the complex issues in the identity of the contested space of Catalonia in tourist image and to give an insight into what ought to be changed.

Tourist image is seen, within this research, as a key factor to understanding the tourist phenomenon itself and its relationship with culture, identity and the geographical area. Thus, the study of tourist image can hopefully provide a deep insight into wider areas and aspects of the tourist phenomenon and its relationship with space, time and society. Accordingly, this study is set in broader research fields on cultural identity perception and representation, power struggles and political strategies based on image and identity, the role of new technologies and the Internet in image formation and dissemination, and so on. This study aims to be reproducible in other destinations and territories.

Besides, the aim is also to provide a useful methodology for other studies concerning image and identity considering other cases of study and different online media, especially web 2.0 and user-generated contents. We seek to advance in the massive treatment of 2.0 data contents and in the building of consistent databases to extract information about tourists' images online.

B. Structure and contents of the thesis

This research is organized around different main sections, in classic organizational style.

First, the Introduction consists of an initial approach to the subject of study as well as the presentation of the aims and hypotheses of this research.

Next comes the theoretical framework which is divided into three main sections. The first of these, consists of a general explanation of the nature of tourist destination image as a complex construct and its different elements. The second explains the traditional approach to tourist image, and the tourist image construct, which can be based, on the one hand, on the projected image of a destination, and on the other, on the image perceived by tourists. Several aspects of these two main aspects of tourist image are described as well as the interactions and influence between them and the mechanisms for image formation. The first part concerning projected image is where the different traditional image-projecting agents are presented, where the concept of identity as the content of tourist image is developed as well as subjects related to it such as its role towards local cultures and identity, stereotypes and the relationship of tourist image identity with political strategies and the economy of identity. In the second part, dealing with perceived image, the different perceived image components are deployed, the factors influencing perceived image formation and interpretation explained and the temporal dimension of perceived image presented. Finally, a third part explains the mutual influence of projected and perceived image and the concept of image reproduction.

The third section of the theoretical framework, which is the most central to this thesis, addresses the subject of online tourist image, its transmission through the internet with special emphasis on the new online agents and the nature of web 2.0 and user-generated content. The section starts by introducing the new context of online image communication. It then deals with the different new and old image-projecting agents and destination image dissemination. After that, the section explains the issue of destination image dissonance and congruency among different agents' images as well as related social and cultural implications. From here on, the section plunges into the deployment of web 2.0, its characteristics and the power struggles originated therein. Next comes a section on user-generated image vs. official image; this section explains the subject of interest of user-generated image versus official image in an online environment and focuses on two online tourist sources: travel blogs and reviews (to represent the former and web 2.0), and official tourism websites (to represent the latter). Finally, the section addresses the phenomenon of perceived tourist image online, represented by user-generated contents, and how this becomes projected when transmitted online to other users.

The second chapter, consisting of four main sections, presents the methodology. The first, refers to the chosen case of study (Catalonia). The second part corresponds to the database section, where the process to obtain and prepare the study database is explained (data collection, download, arrangement, cleaning, debug, language, and mining) as well as how to determine the potential of data dissemination. Next, the third sections explains the selected analysis technique, content analysis, in its several aspects. Finally, the fourth section explains the analysis performance itself and the way to extract the targeted content (the different statistical measures performed) at the different database levels.

The third chapter of the thesis corresponds to the empirical research. This section is divided into two main sections: the database and the results of the content analysis. In the first section, the obtained database is explained and presented in different manners which follow the application of the methodology to the case study of Catalonia. Then, in the second part the obtained results are explained. First, comparative results of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews about Catalonia are explained in different aspects, from the more general to the more specific. Then, specific results concerning the different brands in Catalonia are obtained from travel blogs and reviews.

The fourth chapter consists of the discussion part and is divided into 3 main sections. First, the issue of image in relation to its constituent elements, based on previous results, is discussed. This part discusses image in relation to attraction factors, attributes and feelings as well as image in relation to cultural identity and what the complex territory of Catalonia shows and the issue of identity image dissonance. Second, the subject of the progression of user-generated content is discussed compared to official image. Finally, the last section of the discussion argues in favour of the need for a new paradigm when perceived image by tourists becomes transmitted image online.

The fifth and final chapter addresses the conclusions of the main findings in relation to the hypotheses, the contribution of the findings to research theory and to a better understanding of the case study, the utility and benefits of the methodology as well as possible improvements, further research and social and institutional implications.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Introduction: the relationship between place, identity, image and tourism

The tourist phenomenon is driven to a great extent by the search for difference. In principle the search for difference is based on the premise that different territories have different inherent identities, characteristics and cultures that belong to them and that can only be acknowledged by traveling to those places. Tourist image is an important reflection of these identities and of how they are re-presented, transformed, adapted for different purposes and in different contexts by several agents and tourists.

Destinations (towns, regions, countries, etc.) have certain specific elements or features that identify them. These can be natural features, urban features, landscape. They also have certain cultures and tangible and intangible heritage elements which identify them. Tangible heritage can be found, for example, in what are called heritage sites, which may act as historic symbols of a nation and as a means of attracting tourists (Palmer, 1999). In this respect, Palmer (1999) explains heritage sites contain the symbols and beliefs about a nation which are embodied in a certain historic territory, or homeland, in common myths and historical memories, in a common mass public culture and common legal rights and duties for all members. On the other hand, intangible heritage is the most representative of a community's cultural traditions and identity. "The idea that products, goods or local services are special because they come from a particular culture or region has been gaining ground" (André, 2011).

In this context the role of tourist image is very important as it becomes a link between place identity, its representation and tourism. Tourist image is seen as a complex construct which intermediates the relationship between the destination, its elements of identity and the tourists through the representation, communication and perception of these elements in image. Understanding tourist image can give important clues as to the dynamics taking place at the destination, the wider social, cultural, economic and political processes occurring, and as to the construction and evolution of places, among others.

1.1.1. What is tourist image?

Tourist image must be firstly understood as a complex construct and expression which is embedded within wider social tendencies and processes, and is never detached from these. In a few words we could start by saying that "images are simplifications of more complex ideas" (Nadeau, Heslop, O'Reilly & Luk, 2008) that change over time. Tourism as a social phenomenon is explained and transmitted through multiple narratives conveying an array of images and representations which contain various values and elements of identity. Tourist narratives are understood as socially constructed structures of meanings and symbols, as an "imaginary" to which actions and behaviours are referred; different narratives "coexist rather than exclude each other in the tourist imaginary" (Urbain, 1989). These semiological structures in tourism take the form of particular expressions, very importantly, tourist images. Indeed, images are *meaningful* vehicles for the expression of wider narratives and social processes. These images change over time and evolve as the destination, understood

as a social construct and also as a physical space-of-use, changes along with society. We could say that although the present research does not analyse image in different periods of time, it does acknowledge that changes in tourist images and narratives may be linked to changes in tourism models and in the destination itself (Mariné-Roig, 2011a), hence the importance of understanding the tourist image as an evolutionary entity.

The nature of tourist image is intricate and has been a recurrent issue among tourism studies for the last 40 years. This is not strange if we consider that in postmodern societies, visibility has become the most important medium of cognition and representation (Urry, 1990). As noted in Baloglu and McCleary (1999), already the early works of Boulding (1956) and Martineau (1958) suggested that human behaviour is dependent upon image rather than objective reality. Hence, the tourism phenomenon and tourists' actions are driven by image to some extent. This fact has enormous implications for destinations, and their management organizations.

As explained by Stepchenkova, Kirilenko and Morrison (2009), the study of destination image has made substantial theoretical advancements since the 1970s, when it was first proposed by Hunt (1971). Since then, the tourist image concept has been widely studied from various disciplines such as marketing, geography, sociology, tourism studies, etc. and various topics and perspectives have been addressed. Kim and Richardson (2003) gather the main topics and perspectives studied about tourist image by various authors. Concerning perspectives, these include the relationship of image to destination choice, the image formation process, image modification and change, and image measurement. Regarding topics, these include the components of imagery, relationships between actual visitation and images, effects of geographic distance, influences of news coverage and cultural events, and the destination images held by tourism interest groups other than tourists. The topics mentioned by the authors should be broadened today with Internet related topics, as these add a whole new dimension of tourist image research related to the Internet and online media.

It is generally agreed that tourist image is a complex construct that still needs to be comprehended and further explained. "Image is one of those terms that will not go away, a term with vague and shifting meanings" (Pearce, 1988 as cited in Kim & Richardson, 2003). It can be considered a "widely employed...vaguely defined" concept (Mazanec & Schweiger 1981, as cited in Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). Moreso, today the debate as to the definition and construction of tourist image is alive with the appearance of the new communications media, especially the Internet, and within it, web 2.0. This new context leads us to question the function of the Internet itself in image transmission and creation, the role of the new agents and users intervening, and the concept of tourist image itself, as we shall see.

Tourist image is generally considered to be a construct with several specific features. Gallarza et al. (2002) distinguish four features that identify and describe the image construct: it is complex in nature (it is not unequivocal), multiple (in elements and processes), relativistic (subjective and generally comparative), and dynamic (changing with the dimensions of time and space). These four features of the image construct (complexity, multiplicity, relativity, and dynamism) are themselves multifaceted.

Different definitions of tourist image have appeared along the years. Many authors consider that destination image is ultimately the impressions or ideas people have of a place. From this vantage point Hunt (1975) described tourist image as the perceptions potential visitors have about an area in aspects such as natural environment, climate, and people. Crompton (1979) defined image as “an attitudinal concept consisting of the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a tourist holds of a destination”. “Image is generally defined as a mental or attitudinal construct developed on the basis of a few selected impressions from among the flood of total impressions through a creative process in which those selected are elaborated, embellished and ordered (Reynolds, 1965)” (as cited in Krizman & Belullo, 2007). In turn, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) assessed that “image is not only the individual traits or qualities but also the total impression an entity makes on the minds of others”. Kotler, Haider and Rein (1993) define destination image as “the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about a place”, as a simplified product of the mind created when trying to select essential data about a place from large amounts of information. Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), in making a compendium of other definitions, say that “destination images are the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place”. Similarly, a destination brand can be defined as “perceptions about a place as reflected by the associations held in tourist memory” (Cai, 2002). For these authors, tourist image is considered to reside ultimately in the tourist’s mind but seem not to consider the tourist image created by the different tourism actors.

Although we do subscribe the content of the previous definitions we consider these visions of image to be incomplete. Such definitions describe only what we call the perceived image by tourists. Tourist image should not only be regarded as something perceived and residing in the minds of tourists, but also as something which is created, represented and projected by different actors in the social arena. Even if the ultimate intention of tourist image creation might be to attain the tourist’s mind (as image affects tourist behaviour, satisfaction and destination choice) and that tourist images would not make sense without the tourists perceiving it, the tourist image complex is a compound of images and representations projected by different actors-information sources and perceived images by the tourists, that interact with and influence one another in a two-way path. “The destination image formation is the result of a complex and relative process, where receiver and transmitter send stimuli to each other and constantly change that image” (Palou, 2005). “As different producers and audiences are involved, meanings are differently created, encoded, communicated, interpreted, decoded, and again communicated over time and diverse contexts. Producers and consumers negotiate through this communication in continuous acts of interpretation by (re)imaging and consuming the (con)text” (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002).

Other authors such as Stabler (1988) assimilate the two sides of tourist image to market economic theory (supply and demand). As explained by Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), Stabler (1988) assimilates the projected image to the supply side of the economy corresponding to the destination and the demand side of the economy to the perceived image corresponding to the people. This interaction is held in a certain communication channel or context. Here, as will be later developed, it is argued that with communication through the Internet, and especially with web 2.0 and user-generated content, the double-

sided nature of tourist image formation (projected image vs. perceived image) might be changing substantially.

Other authors such as Kim and Richardson (2003) and Anton and González (2008), collect the essence of the previous definitions of tourist image and overcome the problem of defining tourist image as being only in the minds of tourists by leaving space for multiple actors to establish image. For Kim and Richardson (2003) image is “a totality of impressions, beliefs, ideas, expectations, and feelings accumulated towards a place over time”. Anton and González (2008) define it as an “expression of knowledge, impressions, prejudices and collective emotional awareness related to a specific destination”. These are accurate definitions which gather the essence of the concept of tourist image.

We believe that defining tourist image requires specifically mentioning that tourist images might be images perceived in the minds of tourists or images created and projected by several agents, including the tourists themselves, to comprehend the full phenomenon and to be able to understand the formation process. Other subject areas such as destination branding also distinguish such a dichotomy (agents/tourists) in image. For example, the concepts of destination (or city) brand and brand image represent it. On the one hand, a destination brand is the brand names themselves, symbols, logos, word-marks, their identification, purposes and meanings associated uniquely with the destination; on the other hand, the brand image is the perceptions, associations and relationships created in the minds of individuals, with the public, as a result of the branding process (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). All in all, and going by different names, projected and perceived images are two sides of the same coin.

Our approach to tourist image is to consider it basically as a dynamic compound of both the projected and the perceived images of a destination. Hence, “projected images, are collective images normally assigned to a determined destination, and perceived images are the way in which each individual interiorises the emitted images” (Anton & González, 2008). This primary distinction between projected and perceived images is basic to understanding the approach taken in this research and represents the starting point for further theoretical and analytical developments. Generally, we consider that tourist image is primarily a continuum of images formed through the interaction of the image held and projected by different agents and the image perceived by tourists. Both images interact and influence each other in a dialectical relationship which builds up an overall tourist image. Out of this confluence or clash of all the forces influencing tourist image, meaning or sense are created. Furthermore, we also argue that today with the user-generated content explosion and the generalization of Internet communication, such dual image outline (projected vs. perceived) becomes much more complex as the two sides merge, collide and boundaries dissolve. As developed later on, with the online user-generated content (UGC) and web 2.0, perceived image also becomes projected image in what we will call the transmitted image phenomenon (see section 1.3.6).

This confluence of different images takes place in certain contexts and through certain communication channels. The Internet might be the most outstanding channel nowadays as many authors agree that in recent years “the Internet has become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information” (Lin & Huang, 2006). It seems that “the Internet will continue to influence and shape the tourism industry more so than any other sector of the

economy” (Travel Industry Association, 2005) and that Tourism has been ranked as the top industry in terms of the volume of online transactions (Werthner and Ricci, 2004; as cited in Pan, MacLaurin & Crofts, 2007). Indeed, the Internet has become a major channel of communication for projecting image, and more recently, with the appearance of Web 2.0, it has also become a platform for users to express their perceptions, opinions and feelings, which are accessible to other users, therefore becoming projected images.

After considering the different tourist image definitions and the specific focus of this research, we adopt the following general definition of tourist image:

Tourist destination image is a complex dynamic construct resulting from the interaction of both projected images and perceived images of a place or destination. **Tourist image is then the total sum of ideas, feelings, values, impressions, attributes and identities attached to a place, within both the perceived image by tourists and the representations projected by different actors, which are transmitted in certain contexts and through certain communication channels.**

It must be noted that images, as this sum of ideas, identities and impressions, need not be expressed only in a visual way; they can be transmitted through other media which are not strictly the visual senses. These can be, for example, word-of-mouth or written text.

Considering and analysing both sides of image seems necessary as, often, the projected and the perceived images of a destination do not resemble one another as many factors influence the process of image and meaning, creation and exchange. Tourist image can be really different according to who is creating it, the social, spatial and temporal context to which it refers, among others. “Research on image formation is connected with critical cultural work on representation of destinations and interpretations of pictorial images as indicative of the overall destination image with particular attention to the politics of cultural difference” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). This deviation between the image projected by the agents and the image perceived by tourists is a recurrent issue among destination marketers and researchers that needs to be further explored. This is especially true in the context of the online world where the image and the direction of this image seems to be less and less controllable by the destination itself and the different actors. Now with web 2.0, the opinions of users, which are increasingly credible and are available to other users in the so-called online peer-to-peer communication, become a very important part of the image that tourists may be in contact with and that they will take into account. This user-generated image is almost completely out of the reach of the local Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) let alone the local community. Therefore problems and contradictions may arise if such a user-generated image differs substantially from the image projected by the destination or the “official image”. Such an issue needs to be thoroughly studied and the roles of the different agents participating in image formation reformulated.

In this sense the distinction of the projected and the perceived images of a destination is a very useful one, not only to analyse conceptually and methodologically the image of the destination but also to identify possible deviations among these two concepts that affect the promotion of tourist destinations (Perelló, 2006 as cited in Planas, 2009).

Besides, we should mention that the projected images are representations of the tourist space and the perceived image is also a representation of the tourist space which resides in the minds of people. However, in this research we will use the term “representations” to refer to the projected image as it is something propelled outwards, or (re)presented, to the social arena and to stress that projected image is not something “tangible” and fixed but a subjective construct built by the different agents, a metaphor of the destination. For the (re)presentations of the tourist place in the minds of tourists we will simply use the term “perceptions” as it is something within the mind of the tourist and not the social arena. Whenever the tourist conveys or transmits this knowledge or perception to the outer world, this becomes a projected image that we call transmitted image (see section 1.3.6). Authors such as Mercille (2005) and Almeida and Buzinde (2007) also use the term representations to refer to projected image. Both projected and perceived images are complex themselves and will be explored in later sections.

1.1.2. The tourist destination image construct and its formation

Tourist image construction and formation can be understood on two different axes: the temporal or horizontal one (along the years) and the vertical one (which includes the different elements which contribute to building touristic image at the same time: the agents, the media, external factors, the tourists, etc.). Both aspects of the tourist image construct (vertical and horizontal) are fundamental to understanding its nature. This research focuses on the vertical aspect of tourist image but always acknowledges its temporal and changing nature. Based on the results of this research, temporal studies could also be started.

In this study we understand the construction of the tourist image complex as a dynamic and interactive social process which can be grounded on the symbolic interactionist perspective. As explained by Almeida and Buzinde (2007), this perspective is both a “theory of experience and a theory of social structure” (Denzin, 1992 as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007) largely derived from interpretations of scholarly contributions by George Herbert Mead (1934) and Herbert Blumer (1969). According to Blumer (1969) this perspective rests on three premises: 1) “human beings act toward things (from physical objects to ideals) on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them”, 2) “the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows” and 3) “these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters”. If we apply these premises to tourist image we understand that humans act in relation to tourist destinations, and conceive certain images, according to the meaning they have for them. This meaning (in this case this meaningful image) attributed to destinations has been constructed out of the personal experience, the influence of different information sources and agents in relation to the tourist’s subjectivity and social interaction with relatives, friends, agents and other tourists. Moreover, this meaning (or meaningful image) is not static but in a constant process of interpretation and construction as the tourist encounters new elements and lives new experiences.

Almeida and Buzinde (2007) consider that a constructivist approach and methods are complementary to symbolic interactionism “because both emphasize how action and meaning are constructed, allowing for an interpretive rather than a literal description (Charmaz 2003)” (as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). This approach assumes (1) that

multiple realities exist, (2) that data reflect both the researchers' as well as the participants' constructions, and (3) that the researcher is affected by the participants' world (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). These three assumptions are also considered in this research.

In relation to the above, the social aspect of tourist image formation is fundamental. Taking Shields' (1991) view, both experiences and meaning have a shared nature and destination images are eminently intersubjective. MacCannell (1976) in this same line says that "the actual act of communion between tourist and attraction is less important than the image or the idea of society that the collective act generates". Therefore, the social image is much more than the sum of all the individual perceptions and projections, including both those of agents and tourists. The social side or shared meanings concerning image is actually the global or overall image of the place, at a higher level than individual perceptions. Humans are essentially social beings, and such a condition determines how humans construct their own meanings, how they perceive and interpret reality.

If we focus on tourists' images, how tourists interpret and perceive destinations and destination images is interrelated with social values and patterns. Pretes (2003) explains that although individual tourists can freely attach their meanings to a site, other authors such as Bruner note that certain patterns recur, "notably the consumption of nostalgia, the idea of progress, and an image of traditional" (Pretes, 2003). Moreover, reading through the work of Pretes (2003) one gets the idea that exposure to certain images can be part of a political social conditioning of the people.

What from an individual perspective can be seen as a construction of self-identity through images becomes a collective identity, at a social level, that not only opposes the self and the other but also a group of people before another group of people. In the same way, what McCabe and Stokoe (2004) point out as the affirmation of self-identity when tourists talk about their experiences through categorizing places and types of tourists is also a social construction, highly mediated by images. Such categorization of places and tourists is created in a social context, as the tourists attach themselves to social groups and interact with others and use space according to such common social understandings that belong to these groups. Moreover, according to McCabe and Stokoe (2004) when tourists tell stories about themselves and others as members of certain categories through the description of events they create a "common knowledge about what defines appropriate behaviours for such category members". Indeed, "what tourists see, experience, and learn about cultures they visit is often conditioned by existing structures of image representation and interpretation of cultural others, which can re-affirm stereotypes rather than break them down" (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). These patterns exist socially.

Papson (1981) when approaching notions such as authenticity in tourism experiences acknowledges that "the sociological issue is not whether the experience is true or false but from where and how the definitions which make up social reality arise. For sociology, the problem is source and process; for social psychology, it is the encounter". As Papson (1981) explains the sociological orientation was initiated by W.I. Thomas, in his statement, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (1951, as cited in Papson, 1981). According to Papson this position immediately destroys the true/false components of social reality and embodies in the sociology of daily life.

In this social interaction which leads to tourists' image formation and perception, it is generally assumed that perceived images usually derive from the projected ones and are influenced by them. As Frochot and Legohérel (2007) expose in their book *Le Marketing du Tourisme*: "Tourists search in the first place an ideal representation of the destination that they have internalized through brochures and other information sources", which affects the satisfaction and behaviour of tourists. In addition to that, we argue here that the influence is also the other way round: the perceived image influences the projected one by feeding the circle back. As images projected by agents want to meet the tourists' expectations, these adapt to their preferences. Moreover, with web 2.0, social networks and UGC in general, image transmitted online by users seems to be at the same time perceived and projected image.

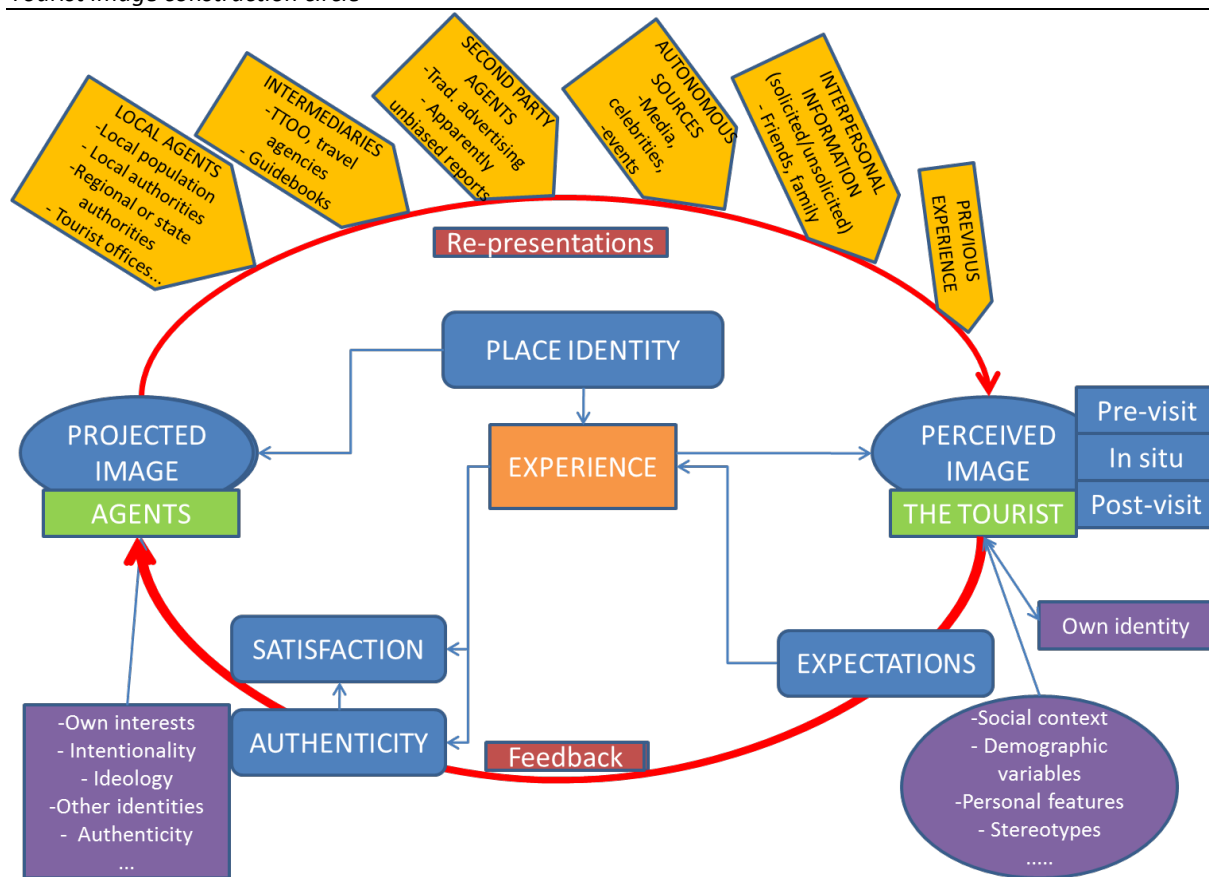
It is especially relevant that today the complexity of the process of tourist image construction and formation is becoming greater with the emergence of the Internet and the social networks. The Internet is an enormous new field of image interaction, creation, construction and especially communication or transmission. It has become the new platform for image creation and transmission "par excellence" where both actors and tourists interact and feedback to one another, and the communication among tourists flourishes.

Although the basic structure or logic of image creation is the same in online or offline contexts, the relationship between the actors and the tourists changes considerably. The power to influence of such actors as local governments, DMOs, travel agencies, etc. seems to lose weight in front of the user-generated content, or the direct influence of other users. Moreover, the presence of different actors is increasingly loose and indistinctive. And, even more, the power to transmit certain images of a user can be as powerful as that of the official website of a destination. The power of tourists or users is growing substantially in this respect. The Internet makes image communication immediate, image changes are quicker and powerful images are more intense but also more volatile. Knowing and understanding what is the user-generated image of a destination online is today fundamental for the development of these places and has enormous implications in cultural terms for local population. Today knowing *what* is said about us and *how* what is said differs from what we would like others to say about us or what *we* are saying from the destination (such as on official websites) are fundamental issues for policy making and cultural and natural sustainability.

Once tourist image has been defined and its formation/construction explained, the different parts of the tourist image construct should be deployed. In this section we give an overall description of the tourist image complex elements and nature that will be looked at in greater detail in further chapters. Depending on the vision of image proposed, the theoretical outline to explain the tourist image construct may be different.

The elements or parts which form the tourist image construct are firstly, those concerning image itself on an abstract level (the projected and perceived images, and the content of these), secondly, the elements concerning the agents or actors producing these images and their channels of communication on a real basis, thirdly, a series of factors external to the image construct itself that influence it and are fundamental sources from which it feeds and, fourthly, the links or communication or information flow channels between these elements.

Figure 1.1
 Tourist image construction circle



Source: Author

Regarding tourist image itself on an abstract level, the two basic parts of the construct are the projected and the perceived images. The amalgam of both images and their interaction contribute to building the overall tourist image of the destination.

Projected image consists of a series of **representations** of the tourist destination in its various aspects. These representations contain various elements of **identity** (see section 1.2.1.2).

Perceived images, similarly, are embodied in certain mental representations of a place containing several elements of identity (ranging from values, emotions, cultural elements to destination characteristics). Perceived images have the particularity of being highly dependent on the tourist according to several aspects: **expectations** greatly influence the perceived image and even the tourist experience itself. If the tourists' expectations are matched, probably the image held will be positive and lead to a certain satisfaction. Image also affects tourist behaviour and decision-making. **Satisfaction** itself with the tourist experience influences the perceived image. Finally the tourist's **perceived authenticity**, that is to say, whether the tourist has perceived the trip or destination as authentic or not, might also influence the final perceived image.

On the side of projected image, we find several **agents** contributing to tourist image construction. Tourist image, online or not, is in essence constructed by multiple agents, including not only the actors who project image but also the **tourist** him/herself who must

also be regarded as an active image-transforming actor (which is often overlooked), transmitting image to other peers which has now been exacerbated with 2.0 communication and the social media. These agents range from local actors, intermediaries, second party sources, autonomous sources, to interpersonal information and previous experience (classification based on Gartner, 1993), using different communication channels including the Internet; each of these agents having certain characteristics, own interests, a certain ideology, their own identities and conceptions of authenticity and place identity (what they consider identifies the destination). On the side of perceived image we find another agent of the image construction process, and probably the most important, the tourist. The tourist has his/her own personal identity, values, interests, experience, comes from a certain social context, etc. which makes perceived image highly subjective. It is the tourist who perceives image and who ultimately motivates tourist image transmission and construction.

On the third level we find the external elements to the image construct itself but that influence it and are fundamental sources from which it feeds. These elements are: the **identity of the place or destination** itself that influences the projected image or representations of the destination in a minor or major way, and the **tourist experience**, which influences and is determinant for the image perceived by the tourist. The presence of the tourist experience within the tourist image formation process gives a temporal dimension to perceived image as this can be before the trip (pre-visit), during the trip (*in situ*), or after the trip (post-visit). These three images might be very different from one another.

Another part of the circle concerns the **links** between these elements and the influences they exert on one another. The projected image influences the perceived image: the actors send information and stimuli in the form of **representations** to the tourists for them to receive them. The latter receive such and send information to the actors in the form of **feedback**. Projected image is inspired in the destination and its identity and therefore influenced by it (different representations of place might exist). Place identity influences the tourists' experience when they are at the destination. The experience in turn influences the perceived image of tourists. Perceived tourist image is influenced by tourists' expectations, which also influence the experience, their satisfaction and their perceived authenticity, among others. Both of these elements (satisfaction and perceived authenticity) are influenced by the experience. Satisfaction itself might also be influenced by whether the tourist has perceived the destination as authentic or not.

Image can be projected and perceived before, during or after the experience. When image is transmitted, the channels through which it is transmitted are really important. The channels of communication are diverse. Communication can be interpersonal, it can be an image projected through multimedia channels (TV, radio, cinema...), a certain material support (a guidebook, a travel agency magazine...), it can be transmitted by the tourist just walking around the destination, etc. But today, undoubtedly, the **Internet** has become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information. Tourism is not an exception and the Internet plays the role of a channel within the image complex which might influence how the elements relate to each other. The Internet is very prominent in image projection but it is also becoming an increasingly important means for tourist image perception and satisfaction feedback. It is becoming especially important at pre-trip planning stage. As Pritchard and Morgan (2005) explain, tourists look for information in multiple sources and are influenced

by them prior to their trip as “brochures, travel guides and *websites* available to tourists shape their expectations long before they arrive at their destination”.

We live in a new context where online image communication becomes dominant in travel and tourism. In recent years this vision of tourist image has been changing as never before with the arrival of Internet communication. The basic understanding of tourist image and the way image is formed remains similar but several new elements appear and certain phenomena that need to be considered are amplified. Some authors note that “with the proliferation of the internet, its convergence with and influence on the de-massification of the media (Toffler 1980; Werthner and Klein 1999), tourism destination images are becoming increasingly fragmented and ephemeral in nature (Harvey 1989)” (as cited in Govers, Go & Kumar, 2007a).

The Internet has revolutionized in many aspects the understanding and process of image formation. Both projected and perceived images become affected. Likewise, the roles of the agents within the tourist image complex change considerably; both the role of agents and especially that of tourists is distorted and new functions appear, especially with the explosion of web 2.0 or the participative web. We live in “the age when electronic channels of communication play a dominant role” (Govers et al., 2007a). As is developed in the following chapters, we maintain in this research that the Internet has not just become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information (Lin & Huang, 2006) but also for tourists’ self-expression and interpersonal communication as web 2.0 enables tourists to become active disseminators of information and tourism prescriptors, and to express themselves through this communicative means.

1.2. The traditional view of tourist image: projected vs. perceived image

As previously mentioned, destination image construction has often been approached and understood through the duality and relationship of projected vs. perceived images and their mutual influence. Both parts of the image construction circle, as well as their relationship, must be understood and explained to comprehend the destination image formation phenomenon and the different elements coming into play.

1.2.1. Projected image

Projected image is related to what elements or aspects and identity elements of the destination the different agents project in their images and representations. A multiplicity of agents contribute to destination image construction by projecting diverse images and identities (attached to certain ideologies and discourse), including stereotypes, with different intentions. These image identities are often used strategically for political purposes (either contributing to uniformize or enhance local identities).

1.2.1.1. The agents projecting image and Gartner’s classification

Projected image originates with several agents projecting images of a destination. This multiplicity of projected images corresponds to a variety of agents involved in tourist image projection and their visions of the place. Some scholars contend that representations say more about those producing them than about the objects that are being projected through

symbols, codes, and meanings (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Hence there is a need to study who these actors are.

These agents are usually seen as the sources of the information that tourists get. As a rule, agents or actors communicate their images through certain objects, platforms or media (communicative means) which are often considered agents themselves as they embody what is often intangible in a tangible way: as the actors may be a business, a local council, a group of people or even be undefined, often their tangible outputs such as guidebooks, news articles, websites, brochures, etc. are treated and identified as agents of the image formation process because they are the concealers of the information. Some of the communicative means are strongly related to the agent, such as tourist guidebooks, and in others the relationship to the agent may be looser, such as in general news. As Molina and Esteban (2006) explain “the value of the information these agents promote depends on it reaching consumers and satisfying their interests and needs. The means of promotion (brochures, guides, and tourist offices among them) are an active and open way of getting information to tourists”. The communicative means through which agents transmit information contain, in turn, certain sub-containers of information such as photographs, text and audiovisual materials.

In relation to the latter, different authors have classified image-projecting agents considering both the origin of image formation and how influential they are on the tourist. Gunn (1972) “was one of the first researchers to conceptualize the image formation process” (Kim & Richardson, 2003). According to Gunn (1972), two major types of image sources lead to the formation of image: organic image (usually unintentional information not related with tourism interests, such as films, newspapers, books, TV, etc.), and induced image (conscious promotion of destinations by the tourist organizations, such as brochures, marketing campaigns, advertisements, etc.). Miossec (1977) classifies projected images into three categories according to the sources/agents they come from: universal images, induced images and ephemeral images. According to the author projected universal images are those that destinations have created, for multiple reasons, in a very solid way and have become part of the collective knowledge and thinking. Induced images are those images created by destination marketing organizations or businesses and that are distributed in the origin markets to influence them. Finally, projected ephemeral images are those created by novels, art works, films, news, etc. that may create a collective image of a destination but that are usually ephemeral, as after some time they are destroyed or may perish.

Phelps (1986) classified destination images into primary or secondary according to the source that led to their formation. While primary images are formed through internal sources, mostly actual experiences and visitation, secondary images are formed through contact with external sources, especially before the trip.

One of the most outstanding efforts to gather and explain the main image-projecting agents and information sources is that by Gartner (1993). This author is cited by many others: Dann (1996), Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997), Kim & Richardson (2003), Mercille (2005), Choi, Lehto and Morrison (2007) Koerte (2009), etc. Gartner (1993), building on the work of Gunn (1972) and Phelps (1986), created a very useful typology of the multiple agents projecting tourist image which relates the degree of control the agents have over tourist image and their credibility among tourists. As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) note from Manfredo, Bright

and Haas, (1992), “source credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness are relevant issues in determining the effectiveness of image advertising by destinations”. Gartner (1993) proposes a classification of eight typologies of agents which form the continuum of the agents creating and projecting tourist image from the least to the most influential to the tourists. These range from traditional forms of advertising, popular culture and media to friends’ and relatives’ advice and actual visitation.

The agents or sources of destination image according to Gartner’s (1993) classification are:

1. Overt Induced I: Traditional forms of advertising (e.g., brochures, TV, radio, print, billboards, etc.). Destination marketing organizations with a specific interest in attracting tourists to their destinations. In this category lie the official tourism organizations who project the image created by the destination.

2. Overt Induced II: Information received from tour operators, wholesalers and travel agencies. They are interested in influencing the tourist’s decision making and creating attractive images about destinations, but are not attached to any specific destination. Images will be projected in order to attract and please their potential customers, probably embodying stereotypes, no matter what the local people of the destination might think of them.

3. Covert Induced I: Second party endorsement of products via traditional forms of advertising. These agents may be famous people or well-known by the audience that will be given the task of projecting the image of and promoting a destination. Their message will probably be better recorded by the audience, be more credible and create a better predisposition to the destination’s brand and image.

4. Covert Induced II: Second party endorsement through apparently unbiased reports (e.g., newspaper, travel section articles). Many of these images are created through familiarization trips by professionals (reporters, writers, etc.). These agents have apparently no self-interest in promoting a destination and are therefore credible. However, the destination has no control over these projected images.

5. Autonomous News and Popular Culture: These are documentaries, reports, news stories, films, television programmes, etc. They create an image of a destination without being really aware of it, through news or popular culture. Destinations have no control over these images and drastic events (such as a terrorist attack) may change the image of the place completely in a very short period of time. After an extensive literature review, Mercille (2005) asserts that it has been recognized that popular culture has a significant impact on destination image. Indeed the autonomous image formation agents appear to have a particularly powerful effect on destination image formation and are able to provide substantial information about a destination in a short period of time (Kim & Richardson, 2003). These agents are very credible and are capable of creating and changing images drastically and rapidly. Moreover, people are likely to evaluate this information as unbiased when compared to traditional advertising, and due to their embeddedness in everyday life, they probably have a high market penetration (Kim & Richardson, 2003). Mercille’s (2005) study focused on these information sources and studied the impact of movies, guidebooks and magazines on the image tourists held.

6. Unsolicited Organic: Unsolicited information received from friends and relatives. These friends and relatives have very credible information as they have visited the destination personally and act in the so-called “word-of-mouth” mode. This may be for example, when some friends show us photographs of a past trip, without having solicited the information and maybe without even having thought about visiting it before.

7. Solicited Organic: Solicited information received from friends and relatives. These agents are highly influential as the potential tourist is already interested in the destination as he or she asks for information and advice from trustworthy people of their environment. This also works as word-of-mouth communication.

8. Organic: Tourist’s actual visitation and own previous experience.

As explained by Choi et al. (2007), the key difference between induced and organic image formation agents is the amount of control the destination has over what is presented. Organic images are those that arise from supposedly unbiased sources (books, school education, television documentaries, and the experiences of friends and family), and Induced images are those that emanate from the destination area itself and its marketing and promotional materials. Planas (2009) includes in her study a summary table of Gartner’s (1993) information sources classification considering the aspects of credibility, market penetration and cost of the image formation agents.

The four induced categories of agents (1-4) are considered to be the ones most controlled by destinations and their marketing organizations where publicity has a very important role in creating, reinforcing and improving tourist destination image by reaching lots of people. Their cost may be elevated although their impact on tourists may be low. However, these induced categories are considered to be less credible for tourists (they are not independent), and therefore may be less influential. According to Gartner (1993), the closer the agents and their images are to destination control, the less credible they become.

Instead, autonomous image formation agents (5), consisting of news and popular culture out of the reach of the destination’s control, are highly influential, authoritative and credible (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997; Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Unsolicited and solicited organic image formation agents (6-7) refer to information received from friends and relatives, which is considered to be unbiased information. These images are highly credible and influential as the tourist does not perceive any economic interest behind them. Moreover, solicited information is especially influential as the tourist considers the provider of the information knowledgeable on the subject and trustworthy. These agents are directly related to the word-of-mouth communication phenomenon.

Finally, organic image (8) is the most influential as it comes from the tourist’s previous experience of the destination.

However, the influence each source has on tourists has not to be taken literally as it can vary depending on the case and multiple circumstances. For example, Beerli and Martin’s (2004) results indicated that for first time travellers to a particular destination, the induced sources such as brochures created by the destination and tour operators of the destination as well as advertising and the Internet had no significant influence on the cognitive image. The only

induced source that had any significant influence were travel agents. Organic and autonomous sources, as well as word of mouth, also had a significant influence on the destination's image.

As noted by Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), the capacity of the different sources to influence perceived image formation mentioned by Gartner (1993) has strong implications for destination tourism organizations who aim to create or change image. What this continuum of image-projecting agents suggests is that the closer to the destination the image-projecting agent is, the less credible it will be; and that the closer to the individual (including his or her own past experience) the more credible the information will be.

However, some criticisms have been found of Gartner's (1993) model: Dann (1996) explains that "missing from Gartner's paradigm, however, are several types of pre-trip sources (e.g. literary and computer generated), as well as all forms of on-trip communication (e.g. guides, maps, etc.)". This is a very important point as today with the Internet, agents have multiplied and changed. Moreover, Gartner "does not appear to entertain the possibility of combining his two covert categories (e.g. celebrities who write travelogues), a situation which would further enhance credibility, while admittedly increasing the cost" (Dann, 1996). This research aims to contribute to improving this model and adapting it to the Internet communication (see section 1.3.2.1).

Other studies emphasizing the role of information sources (or agents) in the formation of tourist images are Fakeye and Crompton (1991), Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Echtner and Ritchie (2003), Beerli and Martin (2004), Molina and Esteban (2006), Kim and Richardson (2003), Choi, Lehto and Morrison (2007), among others.

Numerous authors study the different agents through their different traditional image information sources or objects: photographs (Albers & James 1983, 1988; Markwell, 1997; Jenkins, 2003), tourist brochures (Cohen, 1995; Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Molina & Esteban, 2006; Caton & Almeida, 2008; Cannon 2008), postcards (Albers & James, 1983, Hughes 1992), souvenirs (Palou, 2005; Mariné-Roig, 2011b), films (Mercille, 2005), travelogues (Dann, 1996), guidebooks (Cannon 2008; Galí & Donaire, 2005; Mariné-Roig, 2011a; Mariné-Roig & Anton, 2011), television (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998) and even festivals (Jeong and Almeida, 2004), among many others. Previous experience, considered as an information source will be later explained within the perceived image section.

1.2.1.1.1. Intentionality and power

Tourism itself, and projected tourist image, must be understood as phenomena which are embedded in larger discourses and processes; they are socially and temporally defined and are thus subject to social trends, specific contexts, changes and tensions, hence, they are never neutral. Different forces play a role in projected image which have several social implications. Tourist image is transmitted through certain communication products, which accomplish the three primary contentions mentioned by Kincheloe and McLaren (2003): "they are culturally produced; they do not arise from objective or value-neutral conditions; and they can be conceived as "texts," which can be read for meaning and deconstructed to reveal discourses that undergird them" (as cited in Caton & Almeida, 2008).

- **Intentionality**

The **purpose of agents or their intentionality** is very important for image projection and construction. We must start by emphasizing that tourist image, but also representations or tourist image identity, are understood in this research as something **intentional**, as a **tool to achieve other objectives** that can be economic, cultural, social, political, etc. Projected image is seen in this research as something changeable, which can be influenced and worked upon to be shaped. We believe tourist image can change and be purposefully changed, and that image projection must serve certain social goals. For us, image will have more positive or more negative effects on the destinations, their local community, their culture, life quality, etc. depending on the intentions behind image.

As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), explain “tourism destination marketers seek to establish, reinforce, or change image”. Therefore, why and in what way such agents act with respect to image should be explored. In this chapter we will try to identify these multiple intentions behind image projection and, later on study how different or opposing intentions and purposes lead to power struggles and tensions in the tourist arena.

Several authors agree that image-projecting agents’ intentions are primarily economic (Papson, 1981; Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997), although many argue that they are also political and cultural (Caton & Almeida, 2008; Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). According to our conception of tourism, it seems for us a primordial issue that tourist image seeks a certain goal, not just economic, but also social or cultural to have a positive effect on destinations and to be sustainable. Image creation and the tourism promotion itself should seek to have a positive effect on the destination and its community. From a critical point of view, authors such as Mercille (2005) note that “since representations may exert a significant influence on image, promoters should act responsibly by projecting images of destinations that are not harmful to locals”. Hence, when dealing with the intentionality behind projected image and the content resulting from it, the issue of what we call “image ethics” arises and must be considered when judging how appropriate or beneficial an image is for a destination and its inhabitants in several aspects (social, economic, cultural, etc.).

The main purposes or intentions that we have identified behind image projection can be generally grouped as follows: a) economic/self-benefit perspective, b) socio-cultural and political perspective, c) social relationships, recognition and leisure, d) others. Categories a) and b) can be divided into two groups: with or without the intentionality to benefit the local population and the destination.

a) Economic/benefit intentions/purposes: within this perspective we have the agents whose main objective is to create and project image to attract tourists (Papson, 1981) in an active way, and agents who act in a reflective way as to match the demand expectations and thus, satisfy tourists and attract more tourists (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997), so that they have an economic (often individual) benefit. With regard to the active role agents play to change image and obtain economic benefit, Urbain (1989) explains that “touristic advertising has its strategists and exegetes, who either generalize or specialize and impose their preconceptions”; “They [the actors] pre-judge the selective incompetence of the *receiver*, crediting him with certain reticences and defenses, but do not grant him the capacity for real choice”. In this respect, agents projecting image not only adopt reflective roles in image

creation but also purposefully construct the representations which suit them better to obtain what they want.

In this case we can distinguish:

a.1) Economic/self-profit intention (not for the population or destination): the primary intention of these agents is to gain money for themselves through projecting images which attract tourists to their products and services without taking into account the will of the population or what may be better for the destination. These agents may be intermediaries such as travel agencies and tour operators, guidebooks, hotel chains, etc.

This type of economic intentionality directed at self-benefit is the one most authors refer to. Concerning this type of intentionality, Papson (1981) argues that tourist images usually “stress the qualities most likely to attract outsiders”, the identity of images is usually manipulated in order to bring more tourists to the destination and make them stay longer. Then these positive images of places, peoples and their modus vivendi become part of the inter-subjective definition of everyday reality (Papson, 1981).

a.2) Economic benefit intention for the destination (and community): in this case, these agents want primarily to obtain an economic benefit for the destination, to enhance economic growth and development. These agents are usually dependent on public funding and may be DMOs, administrations, and are generally represented by an official image. “The motive that generally moves public bodies to create city brands is mainly based on tourist or economic interests, and thus the brand created usually is identified with these interests” (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). However, such category must be understood with caution as local authorities have contradictory ways of presenting the destination’s identity, closer or farther from the population’s will and enter into contradiction with their intentions (attract more tourists and gain more money by projecting commercial images, or resist global tendencies by promoting their own cultural identity images) (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005). For Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009), this economic intentionality of public tourism organizations may be “an error, a reductionist conception that limits the potential of the city brand”.

In addition to that, we should see who this economic profit is really benefitting: is it the whole population (which is not usually the case), or is it foreign businesses, or even just a small, socially and economically powerful sector of locals who already have control of the tourist businesses and resources?

b) Socio-cultural, political intentions: some authors think that tourist image creation and projection serve different purposes, much wider than those purely economic that can be more or less beneficial or acceptable to the local community. Jeong and Almeida (2004) worked “to identify the conflicting relationships among cultural politics, place identity, social control and resistance”, and to see these contradictory tendencies behind image intentions.

b.1) According to the community will or beneficial for the community: within this view we find some agents whose main objective to project image is to influence demand in some way to attain positive broader objectives: social, cultural and identity issues, political goals, resistance against colonialism, etc.). Within these actors we can usually find the very same

community or the local authorities. Authors who speak about this type of intentionality behind images are Jeong and Almeida (2004), Almeida and Buzinde (2007), and Caton and Almeida (2008).

Jeong and Almeida (2004) give a clear idea of such dual nature of socio-cultural and political intentions. The authors, talking about the power of tourism and the purposes behind it comment that tourist events, festivals in their case, could be viewed as demonstrations and celebrations of community power and solidarity, as mechanisms of social control, and as mechanisms of resistance to social control where marginalized groups could express discontent and challenge dominant social order through symbolic protest.

b.2) Not according to the community will or not beneficial for the community: within this image perspective agents project images with political or socio-cultural intentions which are not intended to benefit the community. For example, Papson admits that this prevailing positiveness of tourist images that serves to justify everything which is happening in the destination can be “criticized as a form of political propaganda” (1981). For example, in the studies of Poutet (1995), Fernández (2007) and Mariné-Roig (2011a) we see how the promotion and the creation of the Spanish tourist myth under Franco’s rule was a means to justify the regime to other countries, and also to erase cultural differences. Moreover, returning to the example of festivals mentioned by Jeong and Almeida (2004), the authors also explain that festivals “can be seen as attempts by dominant political and social groups to exercise hegemony over less powerful groups by supplying the masses with national celebrations that divert attention from ‘real’ issues”.

c) Social relationships, recognition and leisure: these agents merely project images to help friends or family members, to achieve social relationships or social recognition, or simply to have fun. For example, family and friends, do not usually have any economic or selfish interest when projecting image, merely the intention to give advice to the future tourist or, for instance, to show off socially by showing pictures. Today, with new Internet image transmission, the social networks and the user-generated content phenomenon the intentionality of projected image for these online user-agents is quite different from what we knew before (see more in section 1.3.4.2). Authors who talk about this type of intentionality behind image are Bosangit and Mena (2009) for the case of travel blogs.

d) Other: agents may have other motivations to project image such as providing “information” or “reputation”. For example, general news, when indirectly projecting certain images on a place do not usually have a direct economic interest in attracting people to that place, but project image for multiple purposes: to inform of events, basically, and also probably for some corporate or reputation interests.

- Power struggles

As we have just explained, different agents have different intentions and purposes behind certain projected images. To achieve such purposes the projected images are released for the tourist to perceive them. It should be said that when such purposes are opposed, contradictory or simply different, they result in the creation and projection of multiple images, through multiple information sources, which struggle to become dominant and to

get a space in the tourists' minds. Hence, multiple images, and interests, interact and strive for visibility in a contested space.

Indeed, many agents try to control tourist image for their own benefit. The case studied by Jeong and Almeida (2004) about the power of festivals and the image they project is just an example showing how tourism may serve very different purposes. Such multiple interests behind communication products lead to power struggles and tensions, especially when opposing or differing. These struggles, in turn, may enter and reflect the social, economic and political context.

However, it should be noted that, despite their intentions, agents both in online and offline environments, and notably local agents, "do not have a complete freedom of action, they have binded hands when acting in the tourist arena since many factors influence them" (Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007). These factors could be limited budgets, lack of overall product control and political pressures (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2002 as in Murphy et al., 2007).

As we have seen in the previous section, the purposes of tourist image representations go beyond just attracting more tourists. Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) observe in multiple studies that tensions occur among the different agents and their representations as representations involve "power struggles between local, national, and global groups that have different motivations and want their versions of the story to be told". Power relations in tourism are dynamic and constantly changing, they work in many directions and on many levels, and are interconnected with knowledge (Cheong and Miller, 2000 as in Cole, 2007). However, "there has been little analysis to understand why, and in what circumstances, the power of tourism can be harnessed" (Cole, 2007).

To be able to analyse and reflect the existing interactions and power struggles within tourism and tourist image, Almeida and Buzinde (2007) adopt a "*symbolic interactionist perspective*". This broad perspective suggests that space and place are "in a constant state of transition as a result of continuous, dialectical struggles of power and resistance among and between the diversity of landscape providers, users and mediators" (Aitcheson 1999, as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007).

As explained by Almeida & Buzinde (2007), a premise of this theory is that human actors are best understood in a "practical, interactive relation to their social and physical environment". Furthermore, from this perspective society is not something fixed and objective but is maintained through the interaction of social agents; these agents create culture and cultural capital through interactions (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). In the course of creating culture, "*cultural objects* are perpetuated and transmitted through their repeated expression and through the socialization" (Griswold 2004, as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007) by both locals and foreigners.

Tourist image identity, as the content of tourist image, is a central element within such interaction and power struggle among different agents. As Palmer (2005) notes: "identity and belonging are complex and contested concepts over-laden by discourses of power and control". Palmer (2005) does not describe "identity as a primordial given but as a set of social processes and relations that can be manipulated within a variety of social-tourist

situations". Almeida and Buzinde (2007) from a symbolic interactionist perspective link identity and power struggles embedded within tourist image. The authors work on the premise that "the interaction of social agents within spatial locations contributes to the creation, affirmation, and negotiation of cultural identities". This perspective serves to "examine representational dynamics of a given contested space in which social agents and institutions interact to commodify cultural identity for touristic purposes" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). And, as we mentioned before, not just touristic purposes, but others too (cultural, social, political, etc.).

Almeida and Buzinde (2007) argue that identity also results from interaction and is also constructed and subject to agents' intentionality. From this perspective "identities are produced and confirmed through interactions with others"; "social agents construct and project certain meanings onto the individuals with whom they interact, and they, in turn, interpret the meanings produced by their interlocutors". As Almeida and Buzinde (2007) note from Griswold (2004) such interactions can be made in a directed purposeful way referred to as "identity work".

All in all, projected image identity and values, in general, have to be regarded as something the different agents propel and work upon, and have intentions behind. Image is subject to different forces and struggles, and depending on the force correlation, the context and the ultimate intentions of the agents this image will be more or less beneficial for the local population and the destination itself in terms of cultural identity, sustainability, economic development, and so on.

1.2.1.1.2. Ideology and discourse

As we have seen in the previous section, multiple interests behind image result in power struggles that reflect wider social discourses, diverse phenomena and ideologies which should be approached from the perspective of tourism.

"Generally, it is understood that tourism has a discourse of its own, characterized by a myriad of representational techniques and formalities" (Xiang, Wöber & Fesenmaier, 2008). "The discourse of tourism is a discourse of identity construction, promotion recognition, and acceptance" (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010). Such tourism discourse is embodied in recreational tourism in many ways; for example, in the "list of verbs from the famous advertising campaign of the Club Méditerranée: "To Eat; To Drink; To Have Fun; To Talk; To Love; To Listen; To Hike" which represent simple movements, natural activities, conviviality, pleasure and comfort (Urbain, 1989). Dann (1996) in his book "The language of tourism", explains that tourism has a discourse of its own both in the act of promotion and in the accounts of tourists. That is to say that several agents, including the local tourism organizations, transmit certain discourses and that tourists, in turn, also have and transmit their own discourse in multiple ways. As Dann (1996) explains "discourse is value-committed"; discourse, "through the processes of domination and subjectification, is said to commit violence on people and things, and to impose authoritative limits on thoughts and action". This social constraint present in discourse can be seen in tourism, it affects not just what is represented and communicated but also what is practised. "Discourse reinforces 'praxis' and vice versa" (Dann, 1996), which shows the great effect discourses and ideology within images may have for tourism destinations and the tourist practices held in them.

According to Dann (1996) “the language of tourism attempts to persuade, lure, woo and seduce millions of human beings, and, in so doing, convert them from potential into actual clients”, emphasizing the purposeful intentions of the tourist discourse, at least that of projected image by agents. Dann (1996) explains that the language of tourism tells tourists about the possible places they can visit and about the pull factors and attractions of various destinations, all that prior to the actual sightseeing. Dann (1996) identifies in the work of Cohen (1989) several concepts present within tourism advertisements which belong to the discourse of tourism: ‘authentic’, ‘original’, ‘real’ and ‘actual’, but also their correlative stranger-dominated epithets applied to native people who are described as ‘primitive’, ‘simple’, ‘unsophisticated’, ‘natural’, ‘different’, ‘colorful’, ‘exotic’, ‘spectacular’, ‘remote’, ‘unspoilt’, ‘timeless’, ‘unchanging’ and ‘traditional’, and so on.

Dann (1996) explains that, in turn, tourists feed back into this discourse by constructing their own images and systems of expectation which evaluate whether what has been promised in the discourse of tourism meshes with reality. If image is not matched, tourists usually contribute by complaining and if, on the contrary, they are satisfied, they contribute to the language of tourism by becoming promoters themselves. The language and discourse of tourism within image greatly affect tourism behaviour and experience. As Dann (1996) puts it, “phrase precedes gaze”. The discourse employed by tourists will depend on several factors such as the tourist types they belong to, which, according to Cohen (1972) are: “recreational”, “diversionary”, “experiential”, “experimental”, and “existential”. According to Dann (1996), a language of recreation exists which playfully re-creates reality. Some general topics in the language of tourism and discourse according to Dann are the 3Rs, 3Hs, 3Fs, and 3Ss of tourism: 1. Romanticism, regression, and rebirth, 2. Happiness, hedonism, and heliocentrism; 3. Fun, fantasy, fairy tales, 4. Sea, sex, and socialization.

Dann notes from the work of Urbain (1989) that “so fundamental is the discourse of the tourist, complete with its enunciation of the archetypal themes of escape, quest, and identity, that the structure of advertising rhetoric follows a similar linguistic pattern” (Dann, 1996). The author also examines the language and discourse of tourism as tools of social control.

But not only does tourism have its own discourse, but also the discourses within tourist image transcend the tourist area itself as they reflect wider social discourses and ideologies. Tourist representations are not neutral or unbiased by these global discourse quarrels. Indeed, they are carriers of these discourses. The nature of a discourse is complex as a discourse encompasses... “all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal, and written texts of all kinds” (Potter & Wetherell, 1987 as cited in Hugues, 1995).

Some authors contend that tourism agents, through their practices, transmit certain discourses affine to their goals and purposes. Hugues, (1995) explains that profit-oriented tourism practices such as market segmentation and niche differentiation can be seen as enabling discourse. “Whether the segments are the result of the statistical artefacts of market research or the cohesion of merging consumer interests, they provide signifying regimes in which identity can be expressed” (Hugues, 1995). Other authors explore how political and cultural intentionality of agents is also reflected in tourism discourse. Palmer (2005) argues that “the discourse of nationness [*within national heritage sites*] reflects the

intentions and agenda of those organizations that own and manage the sites. It is a hegemonic discourse devoid of the nuances, complexities, and contradictions inherent in both defining the characteristics of a particular identity and in the reading of history". Similarly, Pretes (2003), also working on the case of tourism sights attached to nationalist ideology and discourse, asserts that these sights "still contain the nationalizing guiding fictions of their creators".

However, although we assume that agents can purposefully project certain discourses within tourist images, we believe that discourses present in tourist images transcend or escape the intentions of the agents producing them, as images gather part of collective representations (including representations from the tourist) and are subject to the social, cultural, political and historical context. In this sense, communicative relationships of tourism are always subject to structural forces in society (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002). "Touristic discursive practices [...] are increasingly shaped by a variety of sociopolitical forces" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). These forces may be spatial processes such as gentrification in cities (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007) or ideology (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002).

Ideology is an especially interesting concept because it embodies the notion of the different purposes and forces involved in image creation. As Hugues (1995) puts it, ideology is "the formalization of the notion of vested interests". Besides, Ateljevic and Doorne (2002), have worked on the imbrication of the concepts of "power, ideology and discourses of place". The authors build on Marx's view of ideology where this is a selective view of reality and ideas are not neutral descriptions of reality but representations of the ideals and values of the ruling classes. They also build on Gramsci's view of ideology, where "processes of consensus and conflict emerge as negotiated meanings" and "ideology operates to give the impression of a fundamental consensus of views which then becomes woven into the social fabric." For these authors, "understanding this process is essential for examining the selling of places for tourism consumption".

However, Hugues (1995) criticizes the concept of ideology and its utility for tourism studies as it "belongs to the scientific discourse of proof and disproof and the moral discourse of rightness and wrongness" and from the author's post-modern approach, "images do not 'lie' in a post-modern construction" (Hugues, 1995). That is to say that there might not be a reason to search for ideology behind images, or for "good" and "bad", or even ethics behind them. However, we do not agree with this post-modern view, as society moves and is constructed on concepts related to morality and ideology, and as long as we consider them important, not in themselves but socially, they ought to be studied. Therefore, if we agree that images must be understood and studied as social constructions, we must consider social forces (such as ideology) that impulse their conception, creation and projection. In this sense we should also study how different ideologies behind images may contribute to the destinations' transformation in a more or less positive way for the local population.

Authors studying ideology in this respect are Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) who examine "the construction of tourism images from the perspective of **critical theory** to reveal imagery as a political process that encodes and reinforces the dominant ideology of tourism culture, essentially a global process which manifests locally and explicitly involves the construction of places". The authors argue that today scholars consider a more structuralist approach to

images and myths displayed to the tourists, where these must not only be understood in terms of economic and consumption interests, but also in the deconstruction of “cultural discourses of destinations in the wider context of social and political processes” (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002). In this sense, the authors acknowledge the wider discourses underlying image and assert that it is the dominant ideology which is mostly transmitted through them; this could be understood as possibly dangerous or harmful for certain local populations and cultures.

The consequences of ideology are both on an economic level and on that of the cultural identity, the liaison of both concepts being the term of “cultural economy”. It is argued that the transmission of the discourse attached to the dominant ideology reinforces economical and power imbalances, social inequalities and cultural oppression. Some authors analysing this phenomenon are Atlejevic and Doorne (2002) who analyse and compare a series of promotional New Zealand texts from the beginning and the end of the 20th century through discourse analysis and reveal the “imagery of place representations as a reflection of the sociocultural (con)text and underlying ideologies of leisure”. The authors’ analysis reveals that “class differentiation based on the political and economic capital of production has given way to consumption based classes of the global cultural economy”.

In this respect, Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) identify a key idea throughout the work of Morgan and Pritchard: meanings produced and consumed by tourism imaging represent certain ways of seeing reality, images which both reflect and reinforce particular relationships in societies. According to Ateljevic and Doorne (2002), these relations are grounded “in relations of power, dominance, and subordination” which characterize the global world. Similarly Caton & Almeida (2008) extract from Appadurai (1986) and Jameson (1985) that trying to analyse tourism only at a local level, forgetting the global economic forces moving the local production process, would be an illusion, as all relations are touched by the discourse of capitalism and its value system of place consumption.

Moreover, both Caton and Almeida (2008) and Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) agree that Western discourse and ideology are being formed and perpetuated through tourism and the current cultural economy, “by employing established representations of destinations, cultures, and people in various forms of promotional media” (Caton & Almeida, 2008), including brochures, postcards, television programmes, guidebooks, and travel writing among others. Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) assert that this perpetuation of Western ideology, including (neo-colonialist views), is “embedded in the power structures of global production and consumption”. Economy and culture are strongly attached when dealing with the discourse of tourism.

This perpetuation implies that, stereotypes and discourse, especially that called the “western imaginary” serve to dichotomize the Western vs. the non-Western Other, and promote a supposed superior ideology which justifies and legitimates the global power and resource distribution imbalances (Caton & Almeida, 2008). In this context increasing attention is been drawn to tourism impacts in Third World destinations related to the ongoing and controversial process of image representations and creation (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005). Mercille (2005) in his study of the perceptions of Tibet suggests that possible wider discourses about development and the Third World, which situate Tibet in a group of under-developed countries, influenced the fact that tourists actually thought of Tibet as being “poor”. Hughes (1995) underlines the capacity of the global media to encode

ideologically inspired messages and oppositely to mix different sorts of information which “renders ambiguous the existence of a simply given reality”. “These are characterized by instability in a continuous struggle between what Appadurai describes as sameness and difference”.

To assess how ideological messages within image may contribute to spatial and social transformation, Ateljevic & Doorne (2002) depart from the neo-Gramscian approaches to tourist representations where producers and consumers communicate and negotiate between each other in the economic, social, political, and cultural (con)texts they create, constitute and (re)produce, which themselves construct a common sense of hegemonic understanding. From this perspective “ideology may be described as a frame which helps to make sense of and rationalize experience” (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002). This point is remarkable, as it means that ideology serves after all to make sense of reality and experience, and thus it is relevant to understanding the tourism phenomenon and its social consequences.

For the authors, both image producers and audiences are engaged in a dialectical communicative process of constant negotiation and interpretation through “reimaging and consuming the context” which is subject to social structural forces. Furthermore, Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) avow that their argument “unravels the dialectical nature of ideological operations and illustrates that the producers of dominant images are simultaneously consumers of the (con)text that structures relations in tourism”. Again with ideology we see that “engendered by spatial discourses, the dominant tourism culture is essentialized and marked as a neutral activity, hardly ever questioned, yet assumes a distinct set of values and expectations” (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002).

The fact that all tourist images are attached to particular discourses or ascribed to certain ideologies, which may contain neo-colonial or nationalist values, and that they have cultural, social and economic consequences, is especially relevant in the case of the representation of local cultural identities and their transformation. Local culture may be transformed in several (positive or negative) ways in relation to ideology within images and how it is used. In addition to that, it is possible that certain regions are represented using two or more different discourses and ideologies depending on the actors intervening; for example tourists probably reproduce a certain discourse, different to that of locals, and moreover, a clash between dominant discourses and local discourses may occur in a bid to get a way through, in what can be called “representative dissonance” (see section 1.3.3.1). “The study of representative dissonance is proposed as a tool for understanding the conflicting ideological forces that shape destination images” (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005).

Seeing these major implications of discourses and ideology for the destination, the social and economic relationships among its inhabitants, its culture and identity, etc. we should question what discourse is behind tourism and tourist image, and to what ideology and even morality it is attached. Discourses have certain values behind them and transmit social morality. According to Ateljevic and Doorne (2002), one needs to situate tourism representations politically, examine what they include and exclude, and expose whose interests they serve.

1.2.1.2. Destination image identity

This section develops the concept of destination image identity understood as the content of tourist images or representations. We will develop the definition and types of identity in tourist image, their relationship to place identity and especially emphasize the role of destination image identity and stereotypes in the enhancement or standardization of local cultural identities.

1.2.1.2.1. Identity: the content of image representations

The tourist projected image is formed by the different **re-presentations** of a place/destination created and driven by the various agents implied, for multiple purposes, and transmitted through certain communication channels. Projected images are embodied in multiple representations of particular destinations found in guidebooks and other promotional materials, which respond to, support, and shape destination images (Katriel, 1995; Silver, 1993; as cited in Andsager & Drzewicka, 2002).

Tourist image representations are related to the place in the sense that they stand for it, they are created to represent a place and, in a way, re-create it. Projected image is, in a way, a metaphor of the place. In this respect, McCannell (1976) considers image to be a marker representing the sight or destination (the signified) to the tourist. Tourist image representation is a marker or signifier that provides information about the sight or the signified. Dann (1996), when speaking about MacCannells' work, says that representations are usually the first contact sightseers have with the sight and that markers or representations "can also stereotype a destination by highlighting certain 'must see' features". Indeed Dann (1996) explains that on-sight and off-sight markers exist and that "Since off-sight markers anticipate the sight, they are often superior to the sight." For Dann (1996), markers can be regarded as symbols which stand for a represented object and can be conveyed in written messages, pictorial displays, architecture, dress, and so on.

Furthermore, "**representations**, whether textual, verbal, or pictorial, are powerful elements through which the world is understood" (Buzinde, Santos, & Smith, 2006 as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Xiang et al. (2008) consider that "the symbolic representation of the tourism industry leads to the understanding of the unique nature of information presented to, and used by, travellers". As extracted by Xiang et al. (2008) from various related works "information provided by the tourism industry in its various forms (e.g., signs, brochures, highway billboards, TV commercials, texts, visuals, and online website contents) can be considered symbolic markers of a place and the representation of destinations can have a substantial impact on the consumption of travel". Some authors, such as MacCannell (1976) and Dann (1996) even argue that in post-modern times representation is more important than or superior to reality. Thus the importance of studying such representations of place, such as pictures "not only present the product (destination) but can also communicate attributes, characteristics, concepts, values, and ideas" (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). Representations are an "essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture" and "involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things" (Hall, 2002). Almeida and Buzinde (2007) emphasize the "meaning-making ability" of representations. Due to this ability, the authors explain representations are crucial to define and construct place or destination identity and are key elements to comprehend the beliefs and values of a culture (its cultural capital).

In this respect, representations or projected images can be said to have an important role over the construction of certain cultural identities, and may have effects on the spaces, environments and landscapes related to these identities. As Almeida and Buzinde (2007) found in their study, local agents represented their minority cultural identity in three aspects related to space: 1. History, by invoking historical detail to represent themselves as the legitimated residents of the area, 2. Space, they elaborate architectural constructions to affirm their cultural identity through space delimitation, 3. Affirmation, as they enhance tourism representations on the rich legacy and persistent presence of the community in the area of study.

Re-presentations within projected images, as social constructs, must be studied within a social and cultural framework in order to be understood. Planas (2009), reading through the work of Galí and Donaire (2003), asserts that projected images are social constructions, they simplify, select and frequently distort the reality which they aim to represent; Re-presentations are re-elaborate elements that always imply someone's action behind, who consciously or unconsciously determines the image of a destination. Thus, a representation is subjective and can never be "neutral" nor "real".

- Definition and types of image identity

After seeing the nature of representations and their relationship with cultural identity issues, we should speak about their content, the information being sent within them. We consider that image representations contain identity or certain identity elements. These elements and information within tourist representations can be seen as elements' identity because they qualify and identify the destination or sight.

If we again take Urbain's (1989) conception of images as being part of wider narratives (socially constructed structures of meanings and symbols) we can foresee that images or representations themselves are formed by these different meanings and symbols that identify them. Urbain (1989) very accurately shows the process by which a certain tourist narrative is translated into tourist image. According to the author space is represented [or imaged] in accordance with certain narratives and transformed into signs. These signs are understood here as elements of identity, as a social construct of concepts, symbols, impressions and values, which are attributed to the place and its people and hence subjectively identify them. Destination image identity is the core, the "soul" which gives sense and meaning to projected tourist image. In this research, we understand tourist image **identity** as the symbols, characteristics and elements by which a destination or place is recognized or known by society and individuals. "Identity is the different values, elements, ideas, feelings that are transmitted within image" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Tourist image identity is something inseparable from the "recognition" concept.

Indeed, "identity is a social construct" (Palmer, 2005) which is understood in tourist image not as an essentialist place and cultural identity, but as a represented and constructed identity which is transmitted through the tourist image and embedded within certain tourist narratives and discourses. These identities within tourist image representations are dynamic and change with the dimensions of space and time. "They all are dynamic items according to the existing heritage of each place, but also to the existence of other components that may in their turn create new items of identity" (Anton, 2010). Identities are constructed and created for multiple reasons and continuously evolve. As Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) put it

“identities of destinations around the world are endlessly reinvented as marketing creates powerful social and cultural representations of place”.

In general terms, we consider that tourism representations “function as communicative practices through which information on cultural identities and tourism spaces is relayed” (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007) for multiple purposes. Tourist image identity conveys different elements identifying a place as such that can be cultural, physical, social, attributes, etc. This distinction between the information about cultural identities and information about tourism spaces gives rise to the concept of tourism image identity that we adopt.

We understand tourist image identity as being formed by both representations of cultural/ethnic identities of the people inhabiting destinations and the attribute-based elements that generally identify the place itself (the represented characteristics or attributes of the destination). The general attribute-based elements that identify the place can be its natural features, feelings about the destination, characteristics or elements related to the activities the tourists do at the destination (related to different tourism modalities), judgements and opinions, and so on. Instead cultural identity is the elements of identity ascribed to the ethnic or community characteristics of the people inhabiting the destination and their traditions in contrast to those of tourists. This might include characteristics related to their traditions, folklore, arts, language, etc. “In the case of regions and societies with defined, singular identities, this identity really does pervade everything from lifestyle and forms of production to the natural landscape and the human landscape” (André, 2010).

We believe that cultural or ethnic identity must be especially distinguished from general attribute-based identity, due to its particular characteristics and implications for cultural sustainability and for the local communities’ development and its subjection to several socio-political forces. Moreover, this type of identity and the role of tourism in its preservation or destruction have generated major academic debates. Besides, the identification of attribute-based elements with a destination has led to different debates more concerned with tourism models, space uses and charge capacity, brand personality, environmental sustainability, and so on.

A) General attribute-based identity within tourist image includes all the feelings, values, physical characteristics, social attributions, natural features, tourist uses, elements, etc. which identify a certain tourist destination and that are not specific to what we could call the “cultural or ethnic identity of the place”.

The study of such attribute-based elements of identity is not new, as for example, in destination branding studies, similarly, the destination is “identified and differentiated from other alternatives in the minds of the target market, through the selection of a consistent mix of brand elements that will constitute the message intended to attract consumers” (Cai, 2002; Qu et al., 2011; as cited in El Aouni, Cascón-Pereira & Hernández-Lara, 2013). Such brand elements correspond to the elements that identify the destination and its brand as such. In this case they may also include the cultural identity elements, but mostly they refer to a series of differentiating elements and feelings attached to a destination in a broad sense. Mariné-Roig and Anton (2011) were able to study the attribute-based identity of a mass coastal destination and its evolution through its projected image. “Tourist image

provides information about the elements with which tourist destinations are identified, about dominant tourist models, the trends of the time, etc.” (Mariné-Roig & Anton, 2011).

Such attribute-based elements that identify the place can be generally geographical elements (locations and geographical features identifying the place), attraction factors and tourist uses (elements related to specific tourist modalities such as sun and beach, sports tourism, nature tourism, etc.), and also feelings and ideas associated to places (such as happiness, authenticity, hospitality, etc.).

For example, in projected image, Koerte (2009) identifies groups of general elements that identify destinations, present in image. The author mentions 1. Natural environment, 2. Culture, 3. Descriptive terms, 4. Activities, 5. Attractions, 6. Wildlife, 7. Travel information, 8. Business, 9. Transportation, 10. Accommodation. El Aouni et al. (2013) identified such general elements as the natural environment, the ambience or the infrastructures and the economic situation. Most studies that analyse this type of identity elements are similar to Koerte’s but other authors have included other elements of identity.

Such identification of destinations with certain elements or attractions might be controversial in certain places as some tourist modalities may be more or less aggressive with the territory, more or less pleasing for the local community, more or less economically viable, more or less environmentally sustainable, etc. Although these elements present in image may exist in the destination (such as the beach in a coastal destination), the identity image elements are constructed and it could be the case that the local population and the local authorities do not agree with the tourism model developed in their territory. They may think that other types of tourism that are more interested in culture should be encouraged or that more money should be spent, etc. Every specific case should be studied on its own as these elements have implications for the destination itself and its inhabitants, and every space develops specific tourist types and uses.

Tourism has the characteristic that the tourists have to move to the space or destination to have their tourist experience and perform their activities. Therefore, the general projected identity of the destination is related to the uses tourists make of space and to the elements and features that are considered relevant for the destination. In this sense the attribute-based elements of identity are mainly related to certain attraction factors, to tourist modalities or types of tourism, understood as the interests tourists have and the uses they make of the area. “Attractions have been viewed by many as central to the tourism process”; “they are often the reason for visiting a particular destination, providing activities and experiences and a means of collecting the signs of consumption” (Richards, 2002). Tourist attraction factors and tourist modalities are not just associated with certain natural physical elements, heritage sights or tourist activities and uses, but also with feelings and ideas.

For example, simplifying reality, a certain destination might be identified with nature, mountains, gastronomy, feelings of peace and harmony, trekking, camping, etc. which are identity elements related to certain attraction factors and certain types of uses and characteristics of space. This could correspond to a nature tourism destination. Instead another destination may be identified with having fun, with nightlife, with the sun and the beach (or the 3S), with crowds of people, with all-inclusive hotels, with consuming alcohol, etc. This could be the case of a mass tourism coastal resort destination.

Such associations with certain identity elements have profound implications for tourist destinations, as explained in previously related research, “image may be a propeller of tourism changes and that tourism changes lead to image transformation. Certain tourism models convey certain representations, and representations probably lead to the proliferation of affine models” (Mariné-Roig, 2011a). Such changes are related to socioeconomic changes and an increase in mobility (Mariné-Roig, 2011a). For example Richards and Wilson (2006) point out how the identifying traits of a destination can be subject to a commodification process. The authors explain how commodification affected sun and sea destinations, making them indistinctive and thus chosen only according to price. Therefore, the type of identity propelled becomes of the utmost importance for destination evolution, transformation and development as it transmits different expectations and entails different uses of space.

For instance, in the case of mass coastal tourism destinations the elements of identity with which a destination is identified have strong implications for it. “Mass tourism is a characteristic of modern societies. It could only develop when a variety of economic, urban, infrastructural and attitudinal changes had transformed the social experiences of large sections of the population of European societies during the course of the nineteenth century” (Urry, 2002). Moreover, they are related to the “emergence of relatively novel modes of visual perception which became part of the modern experience of living and visiting new urban centers, particularly the grand capital cities” (Urry, 2002). The identification of the destination with mass coastal tourism elements may lead to place transformation, conflicting relationships between the local community and tourism, and may even lead to bad propaganda for the place. “Tourist image, in a way, evolves in parallel to the transformations of the destinations themselves, giving fundamental clues to understanding how and in what way mass tourism destinations evolve” (Mariné-Roig & Anton, 2011). As found in the study of Mariné-Roig (2011a) on the identity image projected by guidebooks on the top mass coastal resorts of Catalonia “with the tourist “boom” and the consolidation of mass tourism” it is “when guidebooks give the most negative impression of the four top coastal resorts on the Catalan coast” (Mariné-Roig, 2011a).

B) Cultural identity has been a recurrent issue of study within tourism, since tourism is about cultural contrast, the local population is involved and cultural identity representation might be controversial and very strongly affected by political issues. In this sense, “the term “identity” (*as referred to cultural identity*) is perhaps the most established in the subdiscipline. It tends to have been used to explore the role of tourism in the cohesion of collectivities, whether these are local, regional, or class based identities” Desforges (2000). Therefore, many authors when they use the term identity within image or tourist studies refer only to cultural or ethnic identity, not to general elements that identify the place.

Cultural identity elements may be tangible or intangible. As an example of tangible cultural identity elements, Palmer (2005) explains that heritage sites act as identity symbols of a nation; Barthes (1979) explains that the Eiffel Tower symbolizes and identifies Paris and even France. As observed in the UN World Heritage List, tangible cultural heritage is integrated by multiple elements such as religious buildings and temples, civilian buildings and infrastructures, castles and palaces, archaeological remains and ruins, historic centres, quarters or cities, prehistoric elements and cave paintings, rock carvings, walled cities and walls, mining and industrial sites, tombs, etc. André (2010) explains that until recently

heritage had been only associated with material elements (monuments, art, buildings, etc.) but that recently the idea of intangible heritage has appeared with force, the latter being the differential element upon which regional, individual or collective-national identity is based. In the same vein, Huertas, Pritchard and Morgan (2010) explain that nations or culturally distinct regions without state (such as Wales, Catalonia, Lapland, Brittany, etc.), pursuing to distinguish themselves from their states, have used a branding and image creation strategy based on the intangible cultural heritage of these places which includes traditions, oral expressions, entertainments, social rites, rituals and festivals, particular knowledge and practices as well as the skills associated with traditional crafts. Intangible culture can also be embodied in ethnic or national symbols (such as flags, languages, anthems, etc.)

The intangibility and immateriality of cultural identities makes them especially vulnerable to global changes and to power struggles, hence the recent awareness to preserve intangible heritage. These intangible assets classified as such by the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) are:

- Traditions and oral expressions
- The performing arts
- Social practices, rituals and festive events
- Knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe
- Traditional craftsmanship

Identities and representations are multiple, diverse and may coexist and come into conflict. In this sense “we cannot deny the reality of a changing world, living together and coexisting with collective identities and even, the overlapping or common ground between them”. Collective cultural identities are social constructions shaped by several factors such as the social and economic organization, the natural environment, spirituality, etc. (André, 2010). Therefore they are constantly changing and evolving.

Here we argue that cultural identity within tourist image is constructed and is formed through interaction. Almeida & Buzinde (2007) suggest that in tourism spatial contexts cultural identities are “created” and “negotiated”. For the authors, the representational dynamics within tourist image in a given space are the result of an interaction between social agents and institutions who “*interact* to commodify cultural identity for touristic purposes”. But, what elements are communicated and why remains an unsolved issue.

If tourist image representations, and the cultural identity within them have to be seen as items under the influence of power struggles and extremely related to a geographical space and its culture, to the extent that the latter is shaped in a way by the former, they are inevitably related to concepts such as cultural identity, nationalism, ethnicity and colonialism, terms which would fall into the political area.

- Relationship of represented identity and place identity

Within such a conceptual image framework the notions of place identity and of re-presented identity (or tourist image identity) must be distinguished so as to understand their role in image construction. It must be noted that this research focuses on the analysis of represented identity because it is the one directly implied in the image formation process. This constructed and re-presented identity in consideration must be distinguished from a

concept of an essentialist/objectivist place and cultural identity, which is not analysed in our research.

The notion of place identity is related to a physical space and includes an infinite variety of tangible and intangible elements and ideas that are said to belong to it or identify it. This is an objectivist or essentialist concept which considers that a certain space and its population have an inherent identity which actually exists. It could be argued from the notion of place identity that the image projected by a destination, or a given space, reflects such a reality, such an identity inherent to the territory. McCabe & Stokoe (2004) explain that “the spatial characteristics of destinations, as well as the contrasting features of domestic spaces, are fundamental to understanding the dynamic character of destinations and the meanings attached to places by tourists”. Nevertheless, when dealing with tourist image and the relationship between projected and perceived images, “real, objective” characteristics of a place are not sufficient to explain them, since, as stated earlier, tourist image is a social construct and, as such, the identity and meaning it conveys must be sought in social interaction and representation.

Once at this point, the second concept of identity arises. As we have said previously, the idea of re-presented identity can be defined as “the different values, elements, ideas, feelings that are transmitted within image” (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). In fact, tourist image, from the projected side, always contains a certain identity, certain elements, notions and values that make it characteristic. These are called the re-presented identity or the tourist image identity. In this respect, the concept of tourist image identity is related to a destination or the place, not necessarily in the sense that the former emanates from the latter but in the sense that this destination is re-presented or defined by tourist image identity. Identity when re-presented is detached from place identity or from the place it stands for and becomes a subjective and socially constructed element; it is re-elaborated as a compound of several bits and pieces that do not necessarily correspond to place identity.

This is because different agents can project more or less accurate images, more or fewer different things. They can even show identity elements that belong to other places or that do not have any “objective” root in that territory or place. In fact, it must be stressed that even if projected tourist image is made to stand for a place, it does not necessarily correspond to the *real* features, identities or values of that place. As Palou (2005) explains, tourism communication has often created and propelled “fake” destination images at all levels (towns, regions or countries) which do not correspond to and may contradict the reality of those destinations. “Marketing and branding logics (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998) firstly applied on tourism and secondly on the territories have converted travellers’ demands and expectations into the exclusive guide that heads destination management, and consequently, destination brands. For this reason, nowadays, most cities of the world bear a strong resemblance because they answer to similar demands and expectations” (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009).

Projected tourist images are re-presentations and as such are always subjective and partial since they reflect certain elements and not others. Taken to the extreme, projected tourist images could perfectly be invented and have nothing to do with the features or culture of the place they are representing but still be projected as standing for that place. The nature of projected tourist image must be seen as multiple and diverse. Different destination re-presentations coexist and may be more or less congruent with one other.

Returning to place identity and its role within the image construct, the point is that even if we accept the existence of a certain “objectivist” identity related to a given geographical territory and we accept its influence on the projected image identity, this is not useful to comprehend the essentially social and dialectic phenomenon of tourist image construction. This is because such a “reality”, or real identity would be outside the image constructive circle; image construction is made through the action and interaction of different actors and must be sought in this context.

As Hughes (1995) puts it in his work on Scottishness “heritage is treated as a pure signifier. All that is of importance is that this signifier has some purchase in the taste schedules of potential customers. It need not refer to the substantive existence of a signified. If the myth works that is sufficient”. Seeing the case study of Scotland, we understand that tourist image is purposive, subjective and constructed, as the author explains: “Scotland’s distinctive identity, derived from its history, traditions, and environment is considered entirely in terms of the marketing advantage it may have over other commodities”. The existence or not of a “real” Scottishness is irrelevant as long as this represents an advantage to attract tourists to the place. This clearly shows the intentionality of tourist projected image construction. Through the creation of multiple social and cultural representations of a place, identities of destinations worldwide are continuously reinvented (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002).

Some authors such as Jeong and Almeida (2004), adopting a constructivist perspective, illustrate the essentially political nature of place identity when re-presented through tourist image, “not only in the sense that traditional place identity benefits some groups more than others, but also in that it involves a variety of conflicting ideologies”. This constructionist perspective is useful to understand the concept of image identity as a purposive construct, which contains identity selection and projects certain aspects and values of a destination for certain purposes. Tourist image identity has to be seen as the aspects of a destination that the agents decide to project. Such identity selection or partiality leads post-colonial studies to argue that tourist re-presentations maintain the dominating power relations (colonial relations) within a territory, and other studies to conclude that if the means to project a certain identity are in the hands of locals and oriented to community wealth, such re-presentations can help to reinforce local identities.

Predictably, the objective place identity that may lie in a destination cannot be considered the only or ultimate source of image. The main element sought in tourist image analysis should be the re-presentation of the destination, the identity re-presented within image. Therefore, when analyzing destinations’ image construction, the central theme should be what this destination is said to be or have, not if it “really” has it or not. What should really matter is what is attributed to the destination, how it is defined, why, by whom and with what interests or intentionality, rather than if the image reflects the place “objectively”. Such an approach is embedded within a constructionist perspective and a symbolic interactionist perspective where meaning is created through dialectics, through interaction.

But the relationship of tourist **image identity and place identity** can be even deeper. Tourist image identity in representations is not just influenced by place identity but place identity may also be influenced the other way round. We argue that projected tourist image identity has the capacity to influence place identity, and even the place itself, physically. Such idea is supported by studies such as Hugues (1995), Almeida and Buzinde (2007), Kim and Richardson (2003) and Anton (2010). These identity elements or the symbolic value of places

and destinations are the factors creating expectations with tourists, making them territories appropriate for tourist attraction and use (Anton, 2010). "Space is shaped by identity, space is modified by its own representations and thus, representations have the power to influence reality and geography" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Hughes (1995) presents the concept of destination "commodification" to describe the process by which diverse regions and destinations end up having similar or standardized characteristics and identities, brought about by tourism and representations. What symbolic elements are displayed within tourism may then affect these places, their societies and cultures.

Hence, nowadays, the issue of what identity is displayed within tourist image is very present. Special attention has to be drawn to cultural identity (understood as the cultural items belonging to a place or group of people) projected within tourist image. Tourism is about the encounter with the other, about contrasting own cultural identity with a foreign one, but many issues arise in relation to cultural identity when different identities are created that may or may not correspond to the local culture and may come into conflict with one other. The critical cultural approach is especially "concerned with the process of representation; that is, with how meaning is constructed through pictures, narratives, and other objects and language" (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

This transformation of place identity attached to image representations takes place when tourists act and behave in relation to their mental image constructs. "Place and space are fundamental constructs in tourism studies" (McCabe & Stokoe, 2004). As Lefebvre (1996) proposed, "space is produced and consumed by collective social practice, involving social relationships and presenting an arena of social struggle" (as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). As Kim and Richardson (2003) explain, this is related to Hall's (1997) "circuit of culture", where visual language provides representations that produce meanings. "These meanings regulate social practices, influence people's conduct, and consequently have real practical effects" (Kim & Richardson, 2003). As noted by Anton (2010), the semiological spaces mentioned by Urry would embody tourism spaces being transformed by their own representations. They are "spaces able to be identified at different territorial levels tending to become reproductions of what they pretend to represent as they become part of tourist circuits, trying to adapt permanently to the idealised picture tourists have" (Anton, 2010).

Several studies have been conducted in relation to this place identity transformation, influenced by tourist image representations. In their study, Kim and Richardson (2003) contended that "the popular view of a place offered by media may prompt that place to recreate its own identity in this image". Similarly, Morgan and Pritchard (1998) explained that televised images of a certain place may alter the reality of that place and may become the reference model followed to recreate "places as living environments and tourism sites". Almeida and Buzinde (2007) demonstrate that tourist image representations go beyond the world of ideas into the physical spatial world and influence it in several aspects in the case of a contested space, when a community transforms its landscape, habits and habitat to struggle against oppression and affirm and maintain its identity. Hence, tourism studies should examine representations within socio-political frameworks, because such frameworks have implications for understanding cultural identity in relation to tourism (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007).

Tourist destinations are known to be particularly dynamic and mobile spaces; therefore, the place identity present in such areas is also dynamic and subject to change. Such dynamism is

fundamental to understanding the tourist phenomenon. Hugues (2005) explains that the traditional concept of authenticity was strongly related to a “sense of place, structured through shared language and social practices, which cohered into a local identity”. However, the author explains that with today’s capitalism, the integrity of authentic places is undermined and the symbolic content diluted. And the territorial integrity of places becomes de-territorialized (Hugues, 2005). Hugues (2005) cites Appadurai’s (1990) concept of “imagined community” to describe “both the global scale and symbolic invention of the forces which now shape the construction of places”.

Today, tourism must be considered an active agent shaping a destination. In today’s global world McCabe and Stokoe (2004) explore the relationship of globalization and tourism in “the production and consumption of place” and its implications. The tourist image is influenced by the place it re-presents but at the same time this place receives an influence from the tourist image identity and adapts, in a way, to it. Such a dialectical flow between place identity and tourist image identity has to be understood in the context of economic competition and socio-political power struggles. Returning to Papson’s (1981) idea, if tourism depends on preconceived ideas of place and people which are created by both public and private sectors to induce tourists to visit a certain destination, in consequence an infrastructure to support such images is created. Thus, “government and private enterprise not only re-define social reality but also re-create it to fit those definitions” in an interactive and dialectical process (Papson, 1981).

Hughes (1995) explains that this construction of places is promoted by the opposing tendencies of sameness and difference. The global character of capitalism impulses sameness and homogenization through disseminating standardized codes of cultural consumption and depleting symbols of their meaning. “Symbols become arbitrarily attached to commodities in the illusory assembly of competitive advertising strategies”. According to Jeong and Almeida (2004), place identity change is driven by the flows of globalization (including tourism) and increasingly less by the local tradition. What is more, with these foreign influences on place identity new identity paths arise and with them “competing place identities and practices which are contingent on various groups’ personal interests” which therefore “render regional identity amenable to manipulation”. All in all, tourist image is an active agent which provokes changes within destinations affecting their place identity and appearance when destinations try to meet representations and tourists’ expectations, and tourists act accordingly.

- The dual role of tourist image towards cultural identity

In general, we understand that cultural identities are multiple and diverse, and coexist or may come into conflict. The issue of the encounter between identities has been explained as follows:

“We have often seen, and indeed can still testify to how some identities impose themselves on others. In fact, history can be seen as the story of encounters of identities and the current mosaic as nothing more than the fruit of this encounter (often conflictive). Sometimes, the process has been spontaneous, although slow and to a certain extent the interchange by both parties has been well received. However, regrettably there are far too many examples of traumatic and even tragic forced imposition that lead to situations of conflict. Disagreements that instead of

mitigating, often take root in collective memory, above all in peoples, societies and nations where there is a pride in - and an awareness of - their own identity” (André, 2011).

In this contested context of what cultural identity is projected within image, **tourism is said to have a dual role**, either favouring the dilution of local identities in favour of global or dominant identities (thus sustaining colonialist and cultural-oppressive discourses), or instead, providing a platform for regional-local identity claims and political or cultural reaffirmation. For Dann (1996) several questions should be asked to ascertain how image representations will affect the local culture and especially the population: Who represents? Whom? For whom? How? In what medium? Under which socio-historical circumstances of the native people? Under which prevailing socio-political relationships? Indeed, the cultural relationship between tourists and local populations has been long debated in the literature, always bringing up the same general question:

“To what extent do the images that tourists make of the place they visit and of the people who live there, and the practices they adopt accordingly, influence these peoples and the cultures that are theirs?” (Debarbieux, 2012).

On the one hand it is said that tourism dilutes local cultural identity and perpetuates the dominant prevailing images and identities, notably those of colonialism and of political dominance. Evans (1976) points out stratification, folklorization and stereotypification of culture and locals as problems brought by tourism especially in small communities. Some anthropological studies on economic and cultural change in small communities point out that tourism can lead to social stratification, stereotyping the guests in a negative way and make them dependent on international markets. Pretes (2003) argues that “tourism sights, like censuses, maps, and museums, may project a hegemonic, or official, discourse of nationalism”. Bandyopadhyay & Morais (2005), identify several studies which support the theory that the tourist images usually dismiss “the unique characteristics of the local community and replace them with images of what paradise is supposed to look like to Westerners”, showing a timeless oriental paradise. According to Bandyopadyay and Morais (2005), Britton (1979) argues that “these representations strip destinations from the sense of place and unique identity that can fuel cultural resistance, nationalism, and independence”. Bruner (1991), also in this line, argues from a critical point of view that tourism often contributes to reinforce essentialist ideas of national and cultural divisions through its structure and practices. This occurs especially in the cases of large wealth disparities between western tourists and hosts (of the third world), tourism in this case would be feeding colonial relationships and inequality (Caton & Almeida, 2008).

Tourism is also said to be a disruption for local traditions and life. This view is reinforced by works such as Taylor’s (2001) where local populations affirm (in this case Maoris) that tourist image is completely out of their hands and that the tourist image promoted is one homogenizing the rich Maori tribal diversity of cultural identities. Therefore, these populations engage in self-organized and self-promoted heritage tours to try to counteract this dominant homogenizing tourist vision.

Desforges (2000) mentions the work of Smith (1978) on this issue. Smith strongly criticizes tourism for its role in undermining local identities. Greenwood argues that tourism development leads to “the commoditization of culture [which] in effect robs people of the

very meanings by which they live their lives” (1978, as cited in Desforbes, 2000). Cole (2007) argues that even if the commodification of culture is seen as a way of objectifying the cultural other from a Western perspective “this masks the empowerment of the pride brought by tourism and the political resource that a new definable identity may offer”. However, in this study we argue that, even if in some cases this empowerment or “pride” phenomenon can take place, this does not happen when the culture promoted by tourism does not correspond to the autochthonous one. Very often in the case of colonialism and of cultural oppression in general, the identity promoted within tourist image is alien to the region, it is an “imported” or “imposed” identity of which the local population may not feel proud.

As tourist image is constructed by different agents with their own interests and purposes, the cultural elements it conveys are intentional and not neutral, therefore multiple images may be used to exclude or discriminate certain cultures and identities. Pretes (2003) acknowledges that tourism can serve the purposes of the national elite and may serve to assimilate minorities into the dominant system. It seems that tourism may serve very well the interests of the ones in power and facilitate discrimination, among other collateral effects.

As is well known, tourism is both a result and a propeller of globalization, a synonym of the standardization and commoditization of cultures and peoples. Some studies in this respect identified by Reisinger and Steiner (2005) are Arnould, Price and Zinkhan (2003), Go, Lee and Russo (2003), Greenwood (1997), Bianchini (1993), Hughes (1995), Medina (2003) Turner and Ash (1976), Craig-Smith and French (1994), Halewood and Hannam (2001).

Tourist destinations, souvenirs, tourist policies, tourist agents, globalization seem to be diluting local identities and to be contributing to a perpetuation of colonialism and identity oppression. Tourist image, understood as a platform of contact between the tourist and the destination, becomes an active agent of the utmost importance in this whole identity phenomenon. Post-colonial theory has also approached this issue. Caton and Almeida (2008) explain that the concern with Western media representations of destinations, hosts and cultures has been an issue of interest from postcolonial theory which is based upon the belief that colonialism has been and still is “one of the most compelling influences on the West’s interpretation of and interactions with people from different...cultures” (Echtner & Prasad, 2003 as cited in Caton & Almeida, 2008). Then, from a post-colonial critical perspective tourism and projected tourist image identity serve as means to perpetuate the colonialist prism of “us” and the “others”, to create certain pre-conceptions or expectations about places and peoples, to maintain and reinforce myths and stereotypes that do not arise from collective agreement but from private interests.

On the other hand, tourism and tourist image are seen by some as tools for cultural identity reaffirmation and diversity sustainability. Some authors see the projection of certain tourist images as an opportunity to serve certain collective objectives.

Since the very beginning of tourism studies, authors such as Evans (1976) have suggested that local tourism development could lead to revitalize ethnic identity; they wanted to discover “whether interactional factors between tourists and host cultures could strengthen ethnic identity”. Counteracting post-colonial theories, the author suggests that if the cultural homogenization was brought by tourism, “tourism will have helped to destroy its own very

reason for being". Evans maintains that "cross-cultural communication can help to promote adaptive change while preserving or revitalizing local ethnic identity".

Pitchford (1995) moves further on and ascribes the roots of the contemporary ethnic movements of identity reaffirmation to the existence of a colonial past, understanding that colonialism was the detonator and fact without which identity claiming movements would not exist; the latter, would have sprung up by opposition to colonialism. The author argues that in the face of exploitation, discrimination, oppression, etc., these groups of people struggle by securing power and resources and by rehabilitating their cultural image. For Pitchford, tourism can become a tool for ethnic or cultural identity enhancement "when the message broadcast through its medium is consistent with that of the ethnic movement, which in turn reflects the particular forms of victimization experienced by the group".

It is thus suggested that tourism and tourist image can serve the indigenous claims and the eradication of historical injustices. "In some situations, local or national voices resonate over global efforts to influence the image of a destination. When destination communities or governments are empowered, tourism may provide the means for colonized groups to rehabilitate their devalued culture and to broadcast their victimization (Pitchford, 1995). Bandyopadhyay & Morais (2005) also acknowledge the possibility of tourism generating anti-colonial movements or fostering nationalism in recently formed nations.

Moreover, the examination carried out by Almeida & Buzinde (2007) extends "the path for the understanding of tourism as a vehicle for voices to be raised against spatial exclusion", thus relating cultural identity, attached to a certain spatial location, with tourism. For some groups of people, tourism and tourist image identity might be a tool to mark their territory and to avoid spatial exclusion and such processes as gentrification. These ethnic groups, "striving to legitimize, they reproduce their identity through the confirmation of cultural representations that speak to their conceptions of themselves and their interpretation of what they perceive to be tourists' perceptions of them". "Representations of this identity are paramount in communicating the distinctness of the neighborhood to tourists". Therefore some local communities spatially display visual symbols and signs which identify them, "not only to draw tourists to the space but also, most importantly, to represent its identity that has been threatened" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Other studies such as Hughes (1995), on Scottishness, show how tourist images serve to promote regional identities at different levels.

At this point it is important to mention **ethnic tourism**: ethnic tourism is perhaps the clearest example and the very same expression of tourism related to the destination's cultural identity. When talking about ethnic tourism, it is assumed that identity has a physical space of its own, a space that represents a certain group of people among other cultural groups, and in this context "the creation of this space contributes to the affirmation and maintenance of community identity" and pride (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Pitchford (1995) argues that ethnic tourism, can serve as a resource in both the material (economic) and cultural (gain of distinctiveness) aspects of ethnic struggles.

However, other authors such as Cole, (2007) refer to ethnic tourism as "cultural tourism in less economically developed countries". Reading through MacCannell's works, Cole suggests that through tourism local cultures are commoditized and that orientation to outsiders makes the locals self-conscious of their "ethnic way of life and any change has economic and

political implications for the whole group". Although culture transformations occur, Cole (2007) remarks an opposing tendency and suggests that through ethnic tourism and its attached images some areas and cultures are driven to immobility. As the author argues "the state's perspective echoes the tourists' view: the villages should not change". However, the author asks if it is fair to prevent identity change in favour of a tourist market? Furthermore "differing levels of economic development are seen as part of culture, and inequality becomes reinterpreted as "cultural diversity". Following this logic, to preserve the tourism product is to maintain the lack of economic development and hence "to preserve poverty" (Cole, 2007).

Tourism re-presents place identity through different means and identity and culture are packaged and sold in ethnic tourism. For example, Taylor (2001) talks about the contrast between staged cultural performances and newly invented cultural products in which "tourists are now also able to partake in what are being variously labelled "cultural exchanges", or "interaction experiences" in local contexts. These ventures aim to provide tourists with a "real" cultural product, one that is significantly more "genuine" and educational than those more commonly provided by tourism". The author emphasizes the world tendency to demand experiences related to cultural difference in which tourists "wish to become more "absorbed" within the cultural experience" (Taylor, 2001). Most important for this analysis is the fact that tourism and tourist image projection can serve as means to disseminate a message about oneself, one's identity, history and culture (MacCannell, 1976).

Related to ethnic tourism and also strongly related to identity and nationalism is **heritage tourism**: the viewing of heritage sights by domestic tourists is a key aspect in the formation and maintenance of a national identity; "Tourists receive messages sent to them by the creators of the sites they visit" (Pretes, 2003). As Pretes (2003) explains, "Tourist sites may function [...] as places presenting the defining characteristics of nationhood and displaying historical evidence of its existence. Sites of significance help to create a common identity, or "imagined community," among a diverse population. A shared identity is an official goal of countries comprised of many different immigrant cultures. Not only that, intangible culture and folk traditions also seem to be more and more significant to create a sense of identity. Sometimes cultural oppression and dominant discourses may be more reflected in the intangible culture than in tangible heritage, and this has a more direct effect on the local population's sense of community.

Then, a fundamental issue arises: why do tourism, and tourist image, have the power to promote or to dilute local cultures? When and how does one or the other process take place? "Why does touristic commodification lead, in some communities, to disempowerment, while in others, authenticity is appropriated and becomes a powerful resource?" (Franklin & Crang's, 2001 as cited in Cole, 2007). While in some, the commodification of culture may be a dis-empowering experience, in others, marginal cultures have appropriated tourism as a political instrument in the construction of their identity (Bianchi, 2003 as cited in Cole, 2007).

As we have seen, it seems that tourist image in relation to identity can either help to destroy the uniqueness of places or to foster a sense of place and even nationalism. This dual role of projected tourist image is emphasized by Almeida & Buzinde (2007): "Tourists, although posing a threat, are also a vehicle to justifying, affirming, and maintaining (...) identity". So,

the crucial question to ask ourselves is: on what does it depend that tourist image projection will act either as an enhancer or as a diluter of local identity and culture?

It seems that the answer to this question is uncertain and that it depends on the case. For Richards and Wilson (2006) a way of avoiding commodification and serial reproduction is through the application of “creativity”, as this always adds something new to cultural assets, being able in this way to innovate, empower locals and deal with the issue of authenticity in cultural tourism. Besides, here we argue that the answer probably also has to do with the way image is projected, with the intentions of agents, with the purposes behind tourist image, within interaction and struggle. It seems that the actual image projected from the very same destination and the inhabitants has a major role for tourism to enhance tourist image. André (2011) exposes some factors that may influence the impact that tourism will have on local identity (these can also be applied for tourist image): the cultural distance between tourists and their hosts; the destination’s ability to absorb and react to the impact of tourism; the speed and planning of the tourist development process; the local population’s involvement; the level of economic dependence on tourism; the collective strength and self-awareness of the host culture.

We believe the answer to a successful use of tourist image for local cultural enhancement suggested by Pitchford (1995) is that “when group members exercise some control over the content of this image (e.g. through a regional tourist board), then tourism has the potential to play a strategic role in a campaign for cultural revaluation and preservation”. In this respect, Almeida and Buzinde (2007) emphasize the way in which identity and image projection is done to explain the way in which tourism will relate to identity. The authors argue that tourist interactions, ruled in a bottom-up way, enable people to project images according to their cultural identity and will. It all depends upon in whose hands the power lies and what interests it obeys. If the image identity projected is defined by and suits the local population, organized in a bottom-up way, the process will probably have the effect of local identity enhancement.

If communities have a sense of identity, “representational practices have the power to reorganize people’s sense of self, build alternative conceptions of realizable futures, and consequently function as engines of social transformation” (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). However, we should think about what happens in cases where local communities ascribe to different identities, and identity confusion, struggle and coexistence on-site is evident (see Mariné-Roig, 2011b). It may be that some identities were imposed, and that some identities have been adopted by local populations for several reasons. Therefore, issues such as what happens when the local community does not have a unified conception of its own? What is the role of tourism in these cases? Does it contribute to dilute identities or to create a new common identity? This could be addressed in future research.

Desforges (2000) mentions the work of Abram, Waldren and Macleod (1997) which suggests that there may be an endless process of identification and not a decline of previous identities. According to Desforges (2000), this shift in the conception of identity moves from one which was static and said to be spoiled by tourism to a constructive identity resulting from the interaction of both guests and hosts. This is a “more fluid, flexible, and constructive conceptualization of identity”. As Desforges (2000) points out, the notions of identity constantly shift, and for instance now, difference is no longer found in Europe but in other continents.

As a shifting entity that can be actively manipulated, tourist image identity will act in one way or another from the local community's point of view depending on in whose hands its control lies. The important subject seems to be who actually rules image and what capacity of influence the different agents have. The important thing is how it is being done rather than what is being done, the important thing is who is behind the image and not so much what is projected, to serve cultural identity claims in a positive way. As Palmer (2005) explains "identity is not a neutral concept and it is always necessary to ask who is doing the defining, on what basis, and for what purpose?".

1.2.1.2.2. Stereotypes as part of destination image identity

As previously explained, tourist image representations contain several elements of identity, either related to general attributes which identify the destination or to cultural identity. Throughout the process of tourist image formation, very often the identity attributed to certain destinations becomes fixed and adopts certain repetitive and simplified patterns, often responding to the various agents' intentionality and purposes (not to the will of the local community or the majority of the population), especially as the destination's tourist development grows. These patterns are what we call stereotypes and they are of special interest for the study of projected tourist image as they are sent within image and affect and stand for the destination's identity, thus contributing to the enhancement or standardization of various identities.

According to different definitions a stereotype is a "a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment" (Britannica Online), "that has come fixed through being widely held" (concise Oxford English Dictionary). A stereotype can be seen as a "standard/conventional image, received idea, cliché, hackneyed idea" (Concise Oxford Thesaurus). Making a compound of all these definitions, stereotypes are oversimplified and conventional images that follow fixed or standardized patterns and that are shared by many people or socially reproduced. Stereotypes are related sometimes to prejudices or uncritical judgments, thus having in general a negative connotation. In their temporal aspect they usually are long-lasting images, fixed in time.

We know that tourism depends on **preconceived definitions** of places and people which are created by both the public and private sectors to induce the tourist to visit specific areas (Papson, 1981). Kotler admits that "most country images are in fact stereotypes: extreme simplifications of the reality that are not necessarily accurate" (Kotler, 2002). In fact, it is in the interests of a marketing strategy to seek to "define its object in terms of marketing concepts such as "brand image" and "positioning" where "a good product is one that is easily identified, distinct, and knowable" (Papson, 1981). Stereotypes are especially easily knowable, identifiable and distinguishable, and hence are used by agents. With the intention to appeal to tourists, some of these projected images, through marketing tools, stress the qualities that will attract more outsiders, and "strive to project positively evaluated visuals to potential visitors" (Papson, 1981), and may create expectations to tourists, a view which is already supported by Buck (1977). "Tourist advertising creates positive images of a place, its people, a way of life" (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). As Caton and Almeida (2008) point out, such images often go "far beyond the portrayal of "typical" differences, emphasizing highly exotic events and practices that were not representative of the places and cultures

featured". "Whether the reality it [advertising] constructs is based on the statement that it is a friendly place, inhabited by happy, friendly people or whether it is based upon tranquil images of sea and sand, these notions become part of the inter-subjective definition of everyday reality" (Papson, 1981). As usually both constructed place and cultural identities are created in an inter-subjective interactive context, not only with the local community but also with foreigners, stereotypes within image become definers of inter-subjective interaction and everyday reality.

The fact that stereotypes affect the daily reality of the population may be dangerous as these create idyllic images usually obviate the real problems of the community. Very often stereotypes are propelled by external agents who only seek their own economic benefit. As Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) explain, tourism marketing is concerned with the packaging of places "around a series of real or imagined cultural traditions and representations" (Hall, 1997 as cited in Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002) in which labour disputes or class and ethnic tensions are obviated. Similarly, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) reading through the post-colonial works of Cohen (1993) and MacCannell (1976), maintain that stereotyping (in international tourism), "has typically involved creating images of the primitive "Other" that contrast with the modern and supposedly less meaningful lives of developed industrialized societies", and that, in a way, maintains social and economic imbalances related to colonialism, both in international and local scales. In this respect, "Western media have often been criticized for portraying Third World destinations through a colonial prism via images of primitiveness and exoticism" (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005) and have contributed to "the social construction of visited cultures as exotic, primitive, sensual, servile, and dependent on tourists for advancement and modernization" (Caton & Almeida, 2008).

Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) comment that the work of Dann (1996) "found that holiday brochures presented destinations as a kind of paradise" only portraying landscapes, and minimizing the presence of local people and tourists in the pictures. The few locals portrayed "were used to add local color, signify the host culture, entertainment from a social distance, sexual allure, and exoticism" and always appeared as "safe", "familiar" and "happy" people in a stereotyped way. However, "ubiquitous cultural patterns, descriptions of ordinary life, and discussions about contemporary sociocultural developments" were excluded from image (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

Furthermore, in the case study of Maori culture, these cultural identity stereotypes are created "for the purposes of what could, and still can, only be called exploitation" by imperialism (Taylor, 2001). However, the author acknowledges "this image of essential "Maori-ness" has not been an entirely non-Maori construct" as the Maori people performing for tourists become influenced by this identity stereotype in their lives and way of living. The tourist experience and staged performance will contribute in this case to reinscribe an already overinscribed stereotype on essential "Maori-ness" by duplicating and validating it. As Taylor explains about cultural shows, especially those performed by local communities, "cultural performance tends to rely on caricature and stereotype", and usually the more structured the event is, the lower is the contact with the local community (Taylor, 2001).

In relation to the latter, stereotypes are said to be dangerous not only because they obviate the real problems of the population but also for the side-effects they may have on the local culture. Stereotypes may also contribute to dilute, simplify and even modify cultural

identities of local communities, especially in the cases where implanted stereotypes differ from the local population's (socially constructed) culture and its self-conception. These stereotypes might also relate to the general attribute-based identity and may refer to certain uses of space, from which the destination cannot detach although local authorities and the population might consider it not to be positive for them. This is the case of some coastal destinations highly bound to the 3S (Sea, Sun, Sand) or 5S in the Spanish case stereotypes (Sea, Sun, Sand, Sex, Sangria).

Not only does stereotyping seem to be depicting cultures, places and people as idyllic, but also as **extemporary**. Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) observing several studies detected that "developing countries are typically portrayed as primitive, sensuous, untouched, unspoiled, paradisiacal, and stagnant in a romanticized slice of the past". The temporal aspect of stereotypes is very important as they transmit and retransmit certain static ideas and images, that are very difficult to change over time, and that inflict social structures. Because of this extemporary nature of stereotypes, some see in them "an attempt to erase the present" Taylor (2001). Stereotypes make the destination, its culture and people look anchored some time in the past, preventing their evolution.

However, despite their dangers, stereotypes might sometimes be positive for some community purposes. As the case explained by Almeida and Buzinde (2007) shows, sometimes the very same communities reproduce and assume certain stereotypes in order to defend themselves from identity loss and spatial exclusion. The authors explain that in some communities identity is affirmed through stereotypes which counteract other stereotypes the community does not want "offering a valuable corrective to dominant perceptions of the Other". In this respect, it seems that stereotypes are not necessarily harmful for local cultures and communities.

Stereotype building is a process that may differ in the various destinations but that seems to follow certain patterns and that, as we shall see, is based on the will of "othering". Caton and Almeida (2008) mention several case studies where stereotype building is reported. In all these cases, the three un-myths that Echtner and Prasad (2003) found, are repeatedly communicated within projected destination images: the myths of the unchanged, the unrestrained, and the uncivilized. According to Caton and Almeida (2008), the destinations and especially their inhabitants and culture seem to be presented by many agents projecting image as essentially different, as traditional, folklorical, as outward and dependent for modernization, as ahistorical, as antiseptic (being free of famine, poverty, exploitation, war, etc.), as always happy and hospitable, they are presented as relics whose culture is being spoilt by modernization and must be seen before that happens. Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) continue the list of stereotypes on "others": "Others are imagined and represented as pure, innocent, attractive, and desirable"; "they are simultaneously simplistic, undeveloped, hostile, and repulsive".

Caton and Almeida (2008) observed that in some case studies stereotypification was accomplished through foregrounding specific elements of a culture and forgetting others and by "dichotomizing the cultures of the modern West and the Traditional Rest". Multiple studies observed that stereotypes were built under processes of polarization, exoticization, orientalization and racialization of the other as distinctly different from the West (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002; Caton & Almeida, 2008). This process of "othering" occurs in a context where tourists seek an "essentialized difference" (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

A very well-reported case of the process of cultural identity stereotypification is that of Maori cultural identity analysed by Taylor (2001). The author explains that guests supposedly “Experience the Spirit of ancestral Maori”, a “timeless essence of Maori-ness”. These stereotypes were simulated, mimetized, and recreated by the act of sightseeing. “The voyeuristic impression on the postcard prescribes, reinscribes and modulates what is seen first-hand. Indeed, the known-ness of the cultural Other is important; tourists can be sure to get what they expect”. Taylor (2001) observed that promotional materials (brochures and postcards) showed a stereotypical and gendered image of Maori people and contributed to transmit this “supposed *personality* and lifestyle of all Maori, of all time”, without individual, regional or tribal differences.

But moreover, the process of othering which leads to the creation of stereotypes does not just concern the opposition of third world populations and westerners, but also “othering” countries, regions, cities and their cultures, within western destinations. Indeed, essentialized difference and othering is also searched through national differentiation, among others. “National heritage sites convey messages that are the “guiding fictions of a country” which “are made manifest in many places” where layers of meaning are buried during the tourist experience (Pretes, 2003). The term “guiding fiction” is really interesting as it indicates that there is an established or standard guide of what is to belong to a “nation”, in contrast with other nations and, second, because it reinforces the idea that these elements are part of a fiction, a purposive construct. Literally anything can be constructed and projected even against the will of the local population, to create difference and to obtain economic benefit. Tourist image stereotypes are likely to contribute to stir national goals and even conflicts and to contribute to ascribe a certain stillness or unchangeability to culture all over the world.

Due to this important political role that stereotypes play in intercultural identification, colonial relationships, identity conflicts, national and political issues, etc., the influence they have on the destination itself, their temporal persistence and due to the fact that some destinations are trying to counteract some stereotypes, the issue of changing stereotypes should be addressed. Researchers and destination organizations should ask if and how stereotypes can become a positive tool for some destinations. Changing stereotypes or counteracting them is really difficult; although some part of image may be successfully re-imaged others remain (Smith, 2005; Mariné-Roig, 2011b). For example, the study of Mariné-Roig (2011b) on tourist identity image innovation in Barcelona, indicates that although re-imaging Barcelona has been quite successful there are still many persistent stereotypes referring to the Spanish Myth that are very difficult to change that are deeply rooted in tourist images and that may not change in a long time.

Moreover, it seems a certain predisposition of the tourist must be present to change stereotypes as “not only is the tourist required to combat his or her stereotypes of the community and attain historical knowledge of the locale, but he or she should also be motivated to travel for cerebrally enriching purposes” (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). This is an intriguing idea as it may imply that no matter how much promotion local authorities (or the local community) may do to break down certain stereotypes, if the tourist is not mentally predisposed to the new information, this will not succeed and the tourist will keep his or her stereotypes in mind. To make the tourist more prone to this new information, some destinations are trying to raise their awareness on purpose. In the case studied by Almeida and Buzinde (2007), “the community wants to alter the role of the tourist as a

voyeur/voyeuse to that of a traveller” to make him/her aware of the place’s cultural identity and involved with the community’s struggles. Changing the tourists’ attitude may be key to achieve certain identity objectives.

Indeed, “social identities are constructed through the exchange of sign values” (Urry, 1990). The community studied by Almeida and Buzinde (2007) “created signs and symbols that help construct their histories and identity, and, in the process, project and represent these significations to tourists in hope of a social change” (Caton & Almeida, 2008). We should ask if this could similarly be done and how in the case of other destinations with identity issues. Furthermore, stereotypes might also be positive to bring tourists to emerging destinations. “Although frequently conveyed as a stereotype, visuals in destination promotions are salient in the early stages of destination evaluation (Mazanec 1989) and when the tourist’s experience and/or involvement level is low (Shanteau 1988)” (as cited in Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). The authors justify the use of stereotyped images in these cases because it helps to evaluate and reduce the set of attributes regarded. Therefore we should say that although stereotypes in general have a negative connotation and may have strong and persistent effects on the destination and its inhabitants, they may also be used purposefully to achieve the local population’s goals.

Moreover if certain stereotypes and images become interrelated and complex, persist in time and become generalized, they can become what we call **tourist myths**. Tourist myths are especially powerful and persistent networks of images and meanings which are bound to certain tourism models and practices, and to the evolution of destinations themselves. The presence of certain myths may lead the destination to the development of affine tourist models. With tourism myths we see more clearly how image may be a propeller of changes in the destination, and that tourism changes lead at the same time to image transformation.

Chadefaud (1987) specifically related changes in image to the evolution of destinations and tourism models, he related the evolution of the destination with the transformation of the myth (which is embodied in representations and images). This author takes Barthes’ (1972) approach in the understanding of the myth, where this “is a language, a word, a system of communication” (Barthes, 1972). Accordingly, Chadefaud explains that a myth is “constituted by a whole range of images, texts, icons, photographs, suggestive words..., of an aggregate of messages that compounds a whole system of communication” (Chadefaud, 1987). Myths are embedded within narrative processes that drive tourism movements. Through myths, signs add an ideological layer of meaning or connotation which is transmitted through social structures. Hence, the semiotics of attractions arises. For Chadefaud (1987) the myth is the first spark of tourism. Myths, like narratives, evolve, irrupt in a destination, may enter into conflict or coexist, and eventually die; they may lead to spatial and cultural conflicts by submitting certain ideas and identities under the “heavy” myth and serve to naturalise hegemonic ideologies and ultimately render the signified unnecessary. If they last over time, representations can become myths or “reference models for dominated classes” (Chadefaud, 1987). Myths feed social needs and provide ideological structure or meaning to products.

Some authors have studied how tourist myths are propellers of stereotypes. Hugues (1995) studies a particular place myth which attracts many tourists: “...the image of Scotland as a land of history and tradition with a relatively clean, green environment has much to offer in terms of the marketing of food and drink products” (Scottish Food Strategy Group, 1993 as

cited in Hugues, 2005). The report comments on the meaning of Scottishness to many people, and the strong feelings that nationhood can evoke, but this has little purchase on the group's dedication to finding a distinctive identity with market utility. Febas Borra (1978) explains that perhaps the most used visual cliché is that of sunshine, so over-worked that its constant presence in brochure pictures becomes synonymous with a virtual guarantee of good weather in the form of myth. Dann (1996) also stresses the idea that "the language of tourism borrowed from myth a binary structure of opposites and that several contrasting pairs of nouns and adjectives reflected this distinction". Mariné-Roig (2011b) identified the stereotyped elements of the tourist myth of Spain, the "Spain of sun and beach, of *peinetas*, *panderetas*, *flamenco*, *siestas*, *corridas* and *paella*" (Gali-Espelt, 2002), in Barcelona's souvenirs.

1.2.1.2.3. Political strategies

The relationship of tourist image cultural identity with political movements has been an issue studied along the years by several authors. Pretes (2003) targets tourism's relationship with nationalist strategies; the author explains that **nationalism**, specifically in the form of state-building, "is the result of the conscious efforts of central rulers to make a multicultural population homogenous, and to form a single "nation" out of this diversity". Pretes (2003) takes Anderson's concept of a nation as an "imagined community" since in the minds of each fellow-member of a nation lives the image of their communion despite their differences. Reading through Palmer's (2005) work we understand that studying tourism and tourist images in relation to nationalism is crucial in "understanding of one of the most important concerns of contemporary society: identity as a social construct".

It must be stressed that peoples' cultural identity, and the modern concept of nationhood, is notably formed through the contrast with others. Indeed, tourism is built on concepts of difference and sameness, inter-nationality and home. In this context, the role tourism and tourist image can play in the formation of a regional identity becomes evident. Because as Palmer (2005) points out, nationalism "is strongly related to the sense of place, identity and intentionality", we create our identity in relation to space and in relation to the other. Tourism and tourist images are based on the concept of the self vs. the other and, as part of today's society and daily life, contribute to build this national and self-identity; this "nation and nationess" (Palmer, 2005) which determine how people relate with their environment, and thus will act and behave in certain circumstances. Palmer (2005) viewed tourism as a mechanism "enabling people to feel their cultural roots". For the author, the stories of nationhood come from within the tourists' imagination in the form of visual images, which enable the tourist to identify him/herself with a group in front of others.

Tourism, in relation to imagination, memory and emotion, contributes to creating a sense of familiarity through which the attachment to the nation is experienced and comprehended (Palmer, 2005). The hegemonic discourse of nationalism is manifest in private and public tourism sights such as in censuses, maps and museums encouraging tourists to embrace national aims (Pretes, 2003). Both Palmer (2005) and Pretes (2003) study the importance of national heritage sites in the creation and construction of a common identity or imagined community. "A shared identity is an official goal of countries comprised of many different immigrant cultures" (Pretes, 2003).

As mentioned before, tourist image identity has to be regarded as a social, intentional and dialectical construct. Pretes (2003) takes a constructionist approach to analyse the relationship of identity, tourism and nationalism. Within a constructed re-presentation of cultural identity: “what is important is not whether the origins are actually unique, but rather the existence of an intuitive conviction that they are unique” (Palmer, 2005). The important point when analysing tourist image is whether people believe a certain cultural identity is authentic or unique, or belongs to that place.

Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) explain that ideology and power are expressed as discourses of place. Therefore, political and ideological discourses (of place), such as that of nationalism, transmitted through tourist image contribute to the building of places. Such influence on the transformation of place and space has major implications for culture and society. In this respect, tourism and tourist image have often been used for political dominance and nation-building purposes. Political discourses transmitted within tourist image can either be seen as helping to erase local cultures in favour of a national image, or sometimes, as helping to promote local cultures or oppressed nations.

- Tourist image and place identity uniformization

One of the main roles tourist image has adopted when used for political reasons is that of political dominance over a certain territory and over other nations. This dominance has served nation-building purposes by uniting and homogenizing territories with diverse identities and cultures under the idea of the “nation” and of dominant ideology. In many places hegemonic political elites promote nationalism as a way to sustain, justify themselves and promote certain central values attached to their ideology. “Whether it is indirect propaganda to win, or it is indirect propaganda to convince, the transmission of ideology takes multiple forms, and tourism is one of these forms that can’t be forgotten”; “Knowing the imagination of the crowds, is knowing the art of ruling” (Poutet, 1995).

Different examples prove that tourism and tourist image have repeatedly been used for political purposes and that one of the most common and powerful discourses transmitted through tourism and tourist image is that of nationalism, especially that related to cultural identity, serving the local elites as justification of their existence and interests and also as a support to the current socio-economical system. Some authors that point out this phenomenon are Pretes (2003) in the case of the United States, and Palmer (2005) in the case of the United Kingdom who observed how the identity-discourse of Englishness has come to represent the uniform identity of the British nation. Correyero and Cal (2008), Fernández (2007) and Hervé Poutet (1995) observed similar phenomena in the case of Spain and Hervé Poutet (1995) and Galí-Espelt (2002) in the case of Spain over Catalonia.

Nationalist discourses also serve to transmit certain ideologies, ideas and values of those projecting them. Indeed, “sights that reflect and support national ideology still contain the nationalizing guiding fictions of their creators” (Pretes, 2003). The same occurs with tourist images transmitting political values. If the fictions of a country are produced by an elite “they reflect an hegemonic discourse of power” (Pretes, 2003). As Pretes (2003) notes from Smith’s (1997) work, tourism could serve the interests of a national elite by stabilizing their dominant position through affiliating more people to a historically “real” national identity and [by] encouraging socioeconomically “divergent” groups to adopt commoditized lifestyles.

The issue of the relationship of tourism, image and the perpetuation of colonialist power has also been approached. Pitchford (1995) explains that “the colonial experience is a double victimization in that cultural devaluation often accompanies material conquest and exploitation”. The phenomenon of colonialism is attached to certain dominant representations which legitimate certain understandings on ethnic and cultural differences, as “various media products reflect and perpetuate colonialist discourse by creating binary distinctions between Westerners and racial/cultural Others that support a superiority ideology” (Caton and Almeida, 2008). Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) also identify this colonial discourse of the Western vs. Orient and the justification of the exploitation of the periphery through tourism. In addition, not only colonialism exerts cultural oppression over certain territories, mainly overseas; other similar processes have often occurred in Europe and certain nations have systematically oppressed regional and national identities other than theirs. Catalonia, the Basque Country, Wales or Scotland would be examples of this phenomenon.

Sometimes nationalist discourses not only serve as a justification and as a means to unite diverse cultures and territories but also as a means to exclude any possible differences or divergences, they serve to exclude contested definitions of place. For example, Englishness is a well-positioned and dominant identity within the United Kingdom that is purposefully used as a tool for the exclusion of alternatives, more than to unify the whole (Palmer, 2005). What is more, for Palmer (2005), nationalist discourses “promote the belief that identity is in some way primordial, with fixed and unchanging aspects of identity that can be handed down through the generations”. In this sense, nationalism in tourism tends to attribute inherent characteristics to places which are supposed to remain unchanged and still, often reinforced by stereotypes.

Tourism and tourist image have been repeatedly used by different governments and regimes for political purposes. **The case of Spain** may be the best or the most effective example of how tourism and tourist image have been used, not only to attract masses of tourists, but also for political purposes in an attempt to homogenize diverse territories and cultures and to propel a dominant ideology, in one of the most touristy places in the world. Moreover, the case of Spain is a clear example of how tourist image has contributed to the sustainment and justification, of different dictatorial regimes (that of Primo de Rivera and especially that of Franco) and to broadcast their ideology.

The book “Turismo: la mayor propaganda de Estado: España, desde los orígenes hasta 1951” [Tourism: the greatest propaganda of the state, from its origins to 1951] by Correyero and Cal (2008) looks in depth into the Spanish case of the use of tourist image as state propaganda for nationalist purposes. This book explores how at different periods of time, from the beginning of tourism and until 1951 (When the Ministry of Information and Tourism appeared), tourism was used by the different Spanish regimes (including Primo de Rivera and Franco’s regime) for nation-building purposes and propaganda. As stated, the projection of nationalist tourist images “belongs to the State propaganda, and is fruit of the premeditated articulation of stable, profound, well-budgeted campaigns, intimately imbricated with the economic forces of the sector”; as the authors explain, “tourism is the type of social communication with a propagandistic and publicitary character which moves more masses of people” (Correyero & Cal, 2008).

From the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Spain started to promote tourism as a source of foreign currency and tourism was used for multiple national purposes, among which to promote the products of the Spanish industry (especially with the Universal Exhibitions of 1889 and 1929) and to return to Spain its image as a powerful European country after a period of war, at a time when the mass media became essential for the transmission of ideas, publicity and propaganda, for the bigger States (Correyero & Cal, 2008). In 1905, the first official tourism organization was created in Spain because tourism was considered an inner exportation, it helped to autopromote the country, it created an image of the country and encouraged foreign investments. In 1910, for example, the Asociación de Propaganda de Madrid-Fomento del Turismo, made a proposal to restore the roads through which foreign cars were moving around Spain because of “the necessity to foster tourism as a national wealth” through the formation of the great “Spanish Circuit”, with clear nationalist and unifying purposes behind this colossal public work.

All the initial tourism initiatives have a clear “patriotic, social and economic character” (Council of Ministers). During the period of the First World War, Spain profited from its political neutrality to attract tourists and to become a place for “residence and transit of both Spanish and foreigners” after the war. It was then, in a campaign in London, that first the promotional campaign of “Sunny Spain” appeared, presenting the sun as the major attraction of Spain; Spain started to organize tourism zones, especially on the coast (Correyero & Cal, 2008). The image of sunny Spain has persisted since then. Dann (1996) explains that the relationship of tourism and the sun is very strong as it is “Connected with the ideas of happiness and hedonism is the notion of everlasting sunshine”; The heliocentric factor is central to tourism promotion and that the myth of the sun is strongly related to the sea, the sand, to sex and socialization, all part of the Spanish mythical image.

Correyero and Cal (2008) assess that the dictator Primo de Rivera created the PLUS ULTRA agency whose purpose was to counteract external “enemy propaganda”. Tourism was repeatedly used to give a good image of the regime and clean its face. As Mr. De la Vega Inclán, Comisario Regio del Turismo said: “So important as attracting tourists is to achieve that these modify their opinions on our country [...] so that the same tourist would become the most effective agent of propaganda”. However, “inside the country, problems were multiplying despite the attempt to minimize them with smoke screens” (Correyero & Cal, 2008). For example, through the projection of images in films in the US about Spain, Primo de Rivera’s regime tried to silence protests and negative propaganda coming from Catalonia and several foreign countries.

Then came the Years of the Republic. During the Republic, Catalonia assumed its own tourism competencies, and the “Oficina de Turisme de Catalunya” was born. Some of its tasks were to revitalize the “Fira de mostres”, to disseminate the temple of the Sagrada Familia and to propose a General Urbanistic Plan. Some Catalan institutions were created in Paris, “Viajes Catalonia”, in relation with the house of Barcelona.

Three years later, during the civil war both sides saw a strategic tool in propaganda and tourism. The Republic used it to gain support from the international community and to explain what was happening inside: how people were fighting for their freedom and resisting against the fascists; and Franco’s side used it as means to promote the values of the new regime: serious, responsible, defence of the national sovereignty and the possession of resources to finance the development of the nation. After the war the tourism service

created several types of propaganda through leaflets, photographs, panels, brochures, guides, the Spanish National Routes of the War, postcards, maps, etc. A process of great centralization and control of tourism started, up to the point that “the term “tourism” became something exclusive of the State”. The words: fight, winners, create. Tranquility, order, unity and reconstruction became the words of the new Regime, spread through tourism promotion.

The promotion of official propaganda by the same population is an example of how the authorities were conscious that social identity is achieved in relation and contrast with the Other. They harnessed that “tourism and its manifestations, very often, automatically convey a national interest that never should be neglected”. The organisms in charge of the promotion of Madrid argued that tourism propaganda should be a “common effort” that everybody should make. For example, the “Cartilla Turística Escolar”, created in 1968 under the Ministry of Information and Tourism, led by Fraga Iribarne, was devised to get children to know tourism “and to help them love Spain with a universal and open love”. Teachers were supposed to make the Cartilla become “an extra motive to love Spain”. The Cartilla ends with the lapidary sentence: “Promote tourism and you’ll be serving Spain!” (in Correyero & Cal, 2008). As Poutet (1995) stresses, “the autochthonous population become actors of a spectacle where they are invited to greet the tourists at the sides of the roads to give and image of a well-coming country”.

Hervé Poutet (1995), in his book *Images Touristiques de l’Espagne [Tourist Images of Spain]*, especially studies the cultural identity image projected within State propaganda in Spain, and explores a later period in time. This author refers to ‘developism’ under Franco in the 1960s and the use of tourist image by the regime to justify and sustain itself through propaganda from the very beginning. Poutet explains how the Spain of mass coastal tourism is built on the trinity concepts of the 3S (Sea, Sand Sun) issued from the 3Ds (Development, Decontraction and Diversion) typical of the leisure societies, and then adopt a specific form in Spain based on the “espagnolades or andaluzades” of the 3 Iberian S (Sex, Sun and Sangria) or even the three Fs (Flamenco, Football, Franco). According to Poutet (2005) Franco’s nationalist propaganda in tourism becomes the propaganda of triumphalism. The great unstoppable growth of the flows of tourists during the tourist season, arriving at the Spanish frontiers, and the optimistic predictions concerning the currencies they carried with them, offered in fact, a justification *a posteriori* of the goodness of Franco’s enterprise and of his regime. The dictator always promoted the Spanish cultural heritage to culturally justify its existence and it linked it to its glorious past which was being resurrected.

The cultural image projected by Franco is especially clear and directed at promoting the Spain that was “Una, Grande y Libre” (“One, Great and Free”): tradition, folklore, gastronomy, in a word, typism, “cultural alibis” that tourists like, which would serve to “preserve” and renew the image of Spain. According to Poutet (1995) all of this process of mystification was encouraged by the press who created a tourist consciousness or, in other words, a national sense of tourism as if it was a civic duty. Mystification was achieved by cultural image simplification in a “ludic and folklorized way”, with no negative elements present. The image created was exotic as this “enables to articulate at the same time fiction, illusion and trustworthiness”. The “Spanish paradise” where all was permitted, with plenty of colours, debauchery and exoticism, promoted as quotidian eternal banal values, where one was promised unending Sangria and inebriety was born. Franco especially exploited the

concept of difference, of exoticism to attract more and more tourists with the campaign “Spain is different”. The elements the regime promoted were according to what tourists came looking for and viceversa: “the sun, flamenco, the local cuisine and all the “typical places” specially prepared with this intention”. Religious values were projected too because “the religious manifestations and the top spiritual sites rapidly acquired a tourist character” (Poutet, 1995).

With regard to the **cultural identity image projected by Spain**, both Fernández (2007) and Poutet (1995) explain that the image and cultural identity of **Andalusia** was adopted and projected to stand for the whole of Spain, minimizing and uniformizing other existing identities and cultures. At least in the eyes of tourists, “Andalusia has not only conquered Spain, but also Europe, where we dance Sevillanas as they do now in the four corners of the Peninsula” (Poutet, 1995). This shows how this cultural identity made to stand for the whole Spain affected the territories’ cultural construction. Poutet (1995) explains that the character “Carmen” becomes not only symbol of Andalusia but of the entire Spain, becoming its quintessence. The equation Spain = Andalusia was propelled throughout the world, based on the exploitation of this specific cultural identity difference. Gypsy women too, became part of “Spain of pacotilla” images, promoted by *copla* and folklore singers put at the service of the regime, also ensuring the promotion of the sunny beaches where the Andalusian fiesta never ends (Poutet, 1995).

Fernández (2007) especially goes further to explain the issue of the Andalusian southern image and cultural identity that has been made to stand for the whole of Spain through tourism. For the author, “any attempt to analyse Spain’s modernity (...) would have to pay some attention to the role of Andalucía in the construction of Spanish national identity”. According to Fernández (2007), this image is based on a dichotomized image of “the South versus the North, the African-Oriental versus the European, the primitive versus the modern, the foreign versus the national”. As Fernández (2007) notes from the words of Ortega y Gasset, three interrelated features made the Andalusian identity so unique and transmittable: The sense of spectacle, the happiness close to idleness (happy people) and the Andalusian territory as an Earthly paradise. But as Fernández notes, other regions of Spain, very different from Andalusia were often reluctant to be assimilated with its culture, such as the Castilles “but also (and perhaps more intensely) a number of peninsular unites not as radically ‘exclusive’ as Andalusia and yet acutely separate or even separatist: Catalonia, Galicia, Asturias and the Basque country”.

The tourist posters were an essential tool of propaganda, as its first condition of success is the continuous repetition of the main themes with the purpose of reaching an impregnation and the creation of a propaganda atmosphere. They portrayed monuments, types of the national folklore, gastronomy, landscapes and especially the paradisiac beaches. Many posters announced bullfighting festivities called “corridas”, to which flamenco dancers were often associated. The colours of the Spanish flag were usually present in the posters to remind everybody of the national identity (Poutet, 1995).

Be that as it may, all this purposeful projection of the Andalusian-folklorized Spanish image meant that in the eyes of tourists the whole of Spain became homogeneous, erasing profound differences in cultural identity among the different regions and hiding the local customs from the eyes of the foreigners. For Franco, maintaining the image of Spain as that of Andalusia, “andaluzades”, was part of an unequivocal political will to silence the social

claims which could spoil the regime's project (Poutet, 1995). Both Poutet (1995) and Fernández (2007) coincide in that tourists played a fundamental role in spreading and assuming that image. As Poutet (1995) explains, tourists were not worried about the reality of the country, as they had an idyllic vision of it; that of the tourist Spain of paella, of basquaise lamb and sun. And if "to be excited, they want toreros who risk their lives" may it be. Travellers came looking for this paradisiac "primitive, oriental-exotic, un-modern, authentic image of Andalusia", "rather a familiar, intimately known arena, (...), a place they traverse not to discover it for the first time, but simply and joyously to recognize it, remember and retrieve it" (Fernández, 2007).

Poutet (1995) explains, how the cultural identity image and the stereotypes projected about Spain by nationalist regimes are very difficult to change. "The country, which has become a true tourist attraction, suffers a process of reification, which, in becoming a merchandise, must make efforts to remain faithful to these *authentic* [sic] images of itself, from which it obtains currencies and that leads it to a higher level of life". "All deviation is then a treachery of the image and to the benefits it reports, it is considered as subversive from the regard of the common well-being". Image makes an intermediary function "of reproduction and representation, of a pre-existent real, it is a deforming mirror, magic perhaps, but it contributes at the same time to submit it to the stereotype that it is smartly spreading". For Poutet, tourists look for the confirmation of what they have seen in the posters or catalogues which have fostered their trip. Although today Spain, or some parts of Spain, want(s) to detach from this cultural identity image "this image is so heavy and rooted that it never stops sticking to the skin of Spain, even though this wants to detach from it" (Poutet, 1995).

For Poutet (1995) "Andalusia in its whole is a great land which hasn't stopped being the most representative image of Spain around the world. Peinetas, eyelets, boleros, flounces and dots, are also the symbol of the image exportation Spain is selling". As stressed in an article in *Le Monde* (9-1-1998) cited in Poutet (1995) entitled "The fashion of flamenco. Let's go... Franco", "the new fashion of flamenco spreading around Europe didn't cease to strangely remind the general folklorization that Franquism had imposed to the *Different Spain*". Indeed, Poutet stresses that even in the modern times after Franquism, the tourist image of Spain, for so long a prisoner of the difference crystallized by Franquism, is led to immobilism, in this seemingly contradictory appearance of a country that wants to be modern and European, as the Spanish stereotypes promoted by Franco continue to be spread over and over again at all international events.

The cultural identity image of Spain projected through the tourism décor became kitsch and totally unrepresentative of the different local cultures, even of the one seemingly represented; in this respect, the projected Andalusian identity becomes a constructed image of the propaganda. As Fernández explains, this unalterable Andalusian image embodies what is called "the creation of the Andalusian myth". This is illustrated by Poutet (1995): "the Andalusian wearing a large Mexican hat, riding a donkey, in front of a décor of palm-trees and coconut trees, where an Arabic palace, a flamenco dancer, and a pseudo-gypsy appear" (Poutet, 1995). Concerning gastronomy it is the "Spanish tapeo" which is promoted and "Olé" is the first word foreigners are taught when they come to Spain (Poutet, 1995). All in all, the myth represents the 'Spain of sun and beach, of peinetas, panderetas, flamenco, siestas, corridas and paella' (Galí, 2002).

- Tourist image used for local culture enhancement

Strong dominant national discourses such as those of Britain or Spain may make the diverse cultures within that state to react against such uniformization and to create national discourses of cultural minorities or culturally-bound territories. Tourism is a means to help create such identity-based discourses and empower smaller territories. “McCrone endorses this view by arguing that Scotland has felt compelled to guard the iconography of Scottishness”... from the taken-for-granted supremacy of the Anglo-British state, which has... allowed its state flag to become a symbol of English nationalism” (McCrone 1998 as cited in Palmer, 2005).

Pretes (2003) notes from Nairn (1997) the idea that the development of nationalism entails an attachment to customs and traditions, a resurrection of indigenous resources. Such a tendency, as we shall see, is also reflected within tourist projected image (especially by local authorities), which tends to enhance the local values and elements.

McCrone illustrates with reference to “Scotland as a nation” that “it is important to ask what the mechanisms are which reproduce the necessary imagery” (2001 as cited in Palmer, 2005). We have to clarify, to avoid confusion, that this study considers that nations and nationness do not always coincide with a state’s geographical boundary and often regions without state will be considered as nations. As Pretes (2003) states, “in Europe, the basis for nationhood was a shared ethnic and linguistic identity”, not geographical boundaries. It is actually in relation to these nations without state that tourism can play a very interesting role either by diluting their identity or enhancing it.

Even in the case of Spain tourism has been targeted by cultural minorities and oppressed nations to propel their cultural identity image and resist the central rule. This is the case of Catalonia. As explained in Font (2010), tourism in some cases also serves Catalonia to promote its different culture, as the first early travellers not only enhanced its natural features and beauties but also “stress the original character of the country, the existence of its own language and the way the Catalans themselves have historically upheld their own identity”. “For many enlightened travellers passing through Catalonia, the country was seen as an exception within Spain; they usually highlight the hardworking nature of the Catalans, the wealth and power of Barcelona and a relative situation of opulence and wellbeing” (Font, 2010).

However, the common denominator of the main tourist writers of the 19th century “is the exotic, orientalist charm of the Spanish south, particularly Andalusia. In this context, Catalonia and Barcelona are hardly noticed, as they are a long way from these Spanish stereotypes that have lasted to the present day” (Font, 2010). Poutet (1995) dedicated one chapter of his book to Catalonia, a region he refers to as ‘a country within Spain’. As he explains “The Scheme Spain/Andalusia/Flamenco/Gypsies, to which a *Spanished* (españolizada) and bastardized image of Catalonia must be added, or more exactly of Costa Brava, is fully functioning” (Poutet, 1995).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, some destinations in Catalonia became well-known for their intellectual background and Catalanity, “during the last third of the 19th century. This is the case with Sitges, which was very well connected to Barcelona by rail and

which became an intellectual and artistic focal point, with the Art Nouveau gatherings promoted by Santiago Rusiñol”.

The process of national affirmation of Catalonia through tourism started at the early stages of tourism in Catalonia especially with, “first the Commonwealth of Catalonia (1914-1923) and then the Republican Government (1931-1939)” who “undertook a tourism planning policy that would be cut short by the Civil War (1936- 1939) and Franco’s dictatorship” (Font, 2010). Tourism policy was given a decided boost by the recovered institutions of Catalan self-government: the Commonwealth of Catalonia between 1914 and 1924 and the Republican Government between 1931 and 1939. Despite their brief duration, the two institutions carried out notable tourism planning work.” First, “local institutions set up Societats d’Atracció de Forasters (Foreign Tourism Attraction Societies) and, later, the Sindicats d’Iniciativa (Tourist Information Bureaus), of French origin, particularly in destinations which had begun to stand out, such as Lloret de Mar” (Font, 2010) contributed to the diffusion of a Catalan cultural identity image. After that, with the Republican Government, the Catalan Tourist Board (OTC) was established and contributed to the same task.

Then came the times of growth without planning and without democracy of the 1960s and 70s under Franco’s rule. “These were times of *laissez faire*, leading to the massive occupation of the Catalan coast” and the almost exclusive tourism model of the Sun and the Sand (Font, 2010). Poutet (1995) explains that Barcelona (and the rest of Catalonia and Spain) was subordinated until the 1980s to a strongly stereotypical Spanish-Andaloused image, promoted by the dictatorial authorities of Franco’s regime as part of a cultural assimilation strategy; The 1992 Olympic Games offered Barcelona an opportunity to disassociate itself from the stereotypical Spanish tourist image but this image remained very vivid through the 1990s and is still present today. “This ‘single crop’ tourism remained practically unchanged until the Barcelona Olympic Games (1992)” (Font, 2010).

In the case of Catalonia, and especially since the 1992 Olympic games, there have been attempts to project a different image of cultural identity, that of Catalan traditions versus the well-established Spanish image. The Catalonia tourism brand was created. As Smith (2005) and Mariné-Roig (2011b) explain concerning the image innovation in Barcelona, Barcelona displays several cultural identity backgrounds (Catalan, Spanish and Global) and its cultural identity re-imaging is incomplete. As the capital of Catalonia, Barcelona represents the entire Catalan nation and has an extremely complex cultural image; both the innovative Catalan image and the stereotypical Spanish image coexist in the same geographic area. ‘Barcelona’s re-imaging is particularly complicated and controversial because of competing narratives regarding the city’s Catalan versus Spanish versus European identities’ (Smith, 2005), Mariné-Roig (2011b) found that intangible Catalan traditions are especially underrepresented if compared to the folklorized Spanish traditions (flamenco, etc.).

As Font (2010) explains, “both in the past and the present, the principles and values set forth by Antoni Muntanyola in his work, *L’organització turística de Catalunya*, with a quote from Miquel dels Sants Oliver, are still valid: ‘What is right for a people, just as for individuals, is to be themselves, without ceasing to exist, to grow and to improve’. And this is what I believe should be done in terms of tourism”.

Other cases of areas, regions or countries without state have been studied in which tourism and tourist images have been used to boost local or minority cultural identity are the work

of Huertas et al. (2010) in which the cases of Wales and Catalonia, two regions with distinctive cultural identities, are analysed along with their suprabrand identities of the UK and Spain and their capital cities identities. Almeida and Buzinde (2007) analyse the case of the identity affirmation of the local Puerto Rican minority in Humboldt park, a contested space.

1.2.1.3. The economy of identity: branding

The concept of the economy of identity is based on the fact that in today's global world, and especially in terms of tourism, identity differentiation (especially cultural identity, but also attribute-based identity) reports greater benefits, attracts more tourism and represents an added value to the tourist experience and the services offered.

As can be observed in many destinations projecting image, despite globalizing tendencies there is a trend to return to local values or to reevaluate autochthonous identities. As André (2010) explains, changes brought about by globalization seemed to be unifying the world and threatening the societies and cultures of the planet's peoples and nations; "however, globalisation itself has brought about a revaluation of these aspects. Thus, criteria such as the consumption of local products, goods and services, blessed with a uniqueness characteristic of a given society and region, are gaining ground, as they are perceived by the demand as bearers of a new concept of added value" (André, 2010). In fact, opposite tendencies are taking place, in what is becoming a complex scenario for tourist image projection: "for instance, parallel to deterritorialisation processes, intensive reterritorialisation trends are observed that individualise consumption, generate differences and originate feelings related to belonging and/or attaching to specific places" (Anton, 2010). This in tourism, leads to a "permanent redefinition of the sense of identity of places and a Reinvention of marketable or at least communicable local cultural products" (Anton, 2010).

For Anton (2010) in this context of dematerialization of economy "items of identity, including its intangibles, become a key in fostering local and regional development through tourism, leisure and culture". Indeed, today, tourism and leisure potential depends on the symbolic values of its identity and the capacity to communicate, interpret and share them (Anton, 2010). "From an economic standpoint, identity today is thought of as a resource for a region's financial competitiveness, whilst at the same time it becomes an instrument for social cohesion and well-being" (André, 2011).

Increasingly, destinations are promoting "production with a seal of origin, with its own designation, a clear, differentiated identity that gives them a competitive edge" (André, 2010). For André (2010) the economy of identity attached to tourism should be the result of a definite collective identity (expressed by multiple tangible and intangible cultural elements), it should come out of the people of the region who, aware of their identity and belonging, wish to recover this identity not just as part of their wealth and heritage but as an economic driver. Then, this identity should be perceived by the demand or the tourists, and finally these tourists should appreciate this identity and be appreciated by them (André, 2010). As the author explains, "the identity must be able to be defined and differentiated through a series of attributes that will make up what is known as the associated 'image'. Finally, these attributes, this 'image', must be explained and valued by the demand; it must

be attractive to draw their attention” (André, 2010). As Veenstra (2012) explains, successful tourist brands must be “credible, deliverable, well-known, unique and reflect the consumer (desired) self-image”.

As André (2010) emphasizes, “the differentiation, singularity and identity of destinations are, more than ever today, the keystone to the competitiveness of destinations. Indeed, tourism becomes an opportunity to address socio-cultural standardisation, as an element of visualisation, preservation and even reaffirmation of their identity”, it is also a way to increase attractiveness by presenting oneself as unique and offering distinctive experiences. It seems then, that promoting tourism based on local cultural identity and projecting a tourist image based on these elements gives added value to the destination, reporting a greater interest and economic benefits having multiplying effects. It also enables destinations to attract quality tourism interested in culture. Tourism is crucial in constructing an identity-based economy as on the one hand, it spreads a destination’s international reputation (stressing its differentiation as an added value) while on the other, it generates direct economic activity, it influences and has a multiplying effect on other economic sectors and underpins economic and social activity in regions in decline or undergoing a process of economic transformation (André, 2011).

According to André (2010) some of the consequences of applying the economy of identity to tourism are: landscape and environment regeneration; reassertion of social and cultural pride and self-esteem; or recovery of the identifying elements of local material and non-material culture. Besides, the economy of identity is based on three different pillars (André, 2010):

- Identification of those differential features that constitute the image to be presented.
- Tangibility and marketing through the creation of goods or services.
- Development of a marketing strategy adapted to the product.

“This all leads to defining a tourism brand as a symbolic element aimed at making a profitable image and a differentiated product that responds to the values and interests of one or several market segments, without sacrificing its own interest” (André, 2010).

Applying the economy of identity to tourism may be especially relevant in the case of cultural minorities or regions or nations without state. However, the process of adoption of this approach has been unequal: in destinations like “Scotland, identity has always existed, whether consciously or unconsciously, within the tourism policy followed in the public and private sectors and amongst civil society. However, in other cases, like most Mediterranean destinations (including Catalonia), which have a climate and geography that favour the spontaneous development of products popular with the masses, such as sun and sand tourism, although it put them prominently on the world tourism map, it pushed the question of identity into the background” (André, 2010). In the case of Catalonia, later on, promoting an identity-based image and tourism in Catalonia became a priority, first stated as such in the 2005-2010 tourism Strategic Plan (André, 2010). The brand “Catalonia” would be the umbrella brand encompassing multiple territories and products based on the Catalan cultural identity.

Knowing what identity is projected and perceived about a place affects its culture and economy. Identity is a key tool for “growth, economic positioning and branding”; tourism undoubtedly becomes a privileged shop window for a certain identity to present itself (André, 2011). Indeed, as Anton (2010) notes, identity in tourism is a product, construction

and result; it is “identification, representation and belonging” and, moreover, it is a “domain of action, intervention and domination”. The idea that identity projection can be worked upon and that it can lead to transformations is fundamental to understand the role of branding as a strategy of differentiation.

As we have seen, the economy of identity is based on the projection of certain cultural identity and values and attributes, and about designing strategies to disseminate that image (André, 2010). These tasks are closely attached to **branding**, which involves the projection of images and identities for strategic purposes. “Brands are symbols around which social actors, including firms, suppliers, supplementary organizations, the public, customers and even nations construct identities” (Pitt, Opoku, Hultman, Abratt & Spyropoulou, 2007).

According to André (2011), the three pillars that grant a successful implementation of a differentiating strategy in tourism are: identifying the differentiating factors that make up the image to be projected, making identity tangible and giving it a market value, and developing an appropriate marketing strategy for the product on offer. “This implies defining a tourism based brand, a symbolic element whose aim is to make the most of a differentiated image and product in response to the values and interests of different market sectors, without sacrificing any initial interest aroused by the identity on which the brand is based. This brand would then become the foundation for marketing a destination and its products” (André, 2011).

In the present context of cultural identity revaluation, “we are witnessing how regions are adding established brand names from the business world into the mix when they promote themselves. However, the opposite phenomenon also occurs: firms located in regions that have a clearly defined brand and position are adding these to their own promotion. This has the same aim: projection of values, image and uniqueness” (André, 2011). “Thus, in tourism terms, virtually every destination attempts to position its unique culture at the forefront of its branding strategy and this has been the case with many territories which exist within larger European nation states, including: Brittany, Scotland, Wales, Lapland, The Tirol and, recently, Catalonia” (Tresserras, 2008; as cited in Huertas et al., 2010). For André (2011), “identity should be defined and differentiated using attributes that shape the “image” associated with it. These attributes, or this image, have to be explicit enough to be valued by the demand”. In short, the image has to be recognisable, striking and attractive (André, 2011). The identity values these brands convey belong to the intangible cultural heritage defined by UNESCO as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts among other traditions or living expressions. Indeed, as Anton (2010) points out, the Handbook on Tourism Destinations Branding published by the World Tourism Organization in 2009, states that “The term *destination brand* is used in this text to refer to a destination’s *competitive identity*. This is what makes it different and memorable. It distinguishes a destination from all the rest. It is the foundation of the destination’s international competitiveness”.

From a marketing perspective the union of tourist image, representations and its identity elements is clearly embodied in the concept of the **brand**, which represents the corpus of symbols forming the representation of place in relation to product. In fact, the concept of place branding is relatively new, developing in the late 1980s; from that moment, the concept of place branding or destination branding has been widely developed especially

from the point of view of tourism (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). A destination brand is “the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation/region with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all its target audiences” (Dinnie, 2008).

As stated in Murphy et al. (2007), a brand acts “by providing potential tourists with pre-trip information that allows them to identify a destination, differentiate it from its competitors, and build expectations about the likely holiday experience offered by the destination”. Hence, analysing which elements of identity are the ones chosen to be imaged with the destination brand becomes of major importance. Identity within the brand is fundamental for it to exist. As Murphy et al. (2007) noted from the work of Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride (2002), brand identity is central to the direction, purpose, and meaning of a brand and makes connections to functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits relevant to the tourist.

Brand identity can be defined as the mental associations with a brand; those elements which make it recognizable or identifiable comprising values, impressions, colours, feelings, elements, etc. that belong to a certain strategy and have been created purposefully, with a certain intentionality. One of the best definitions to understand the identity elements in a destination brand is “the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identify and differentiate a destination; that convey the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; and that serve to consolidate and reinforce the emotional connection between the visitor and the destination; that reduce consumer search costs and perceived risk; all with the intent purpose of creating a destination image that positively influences consumer destination choice” (Blain, Levy & Brent Ritchie, 2005).

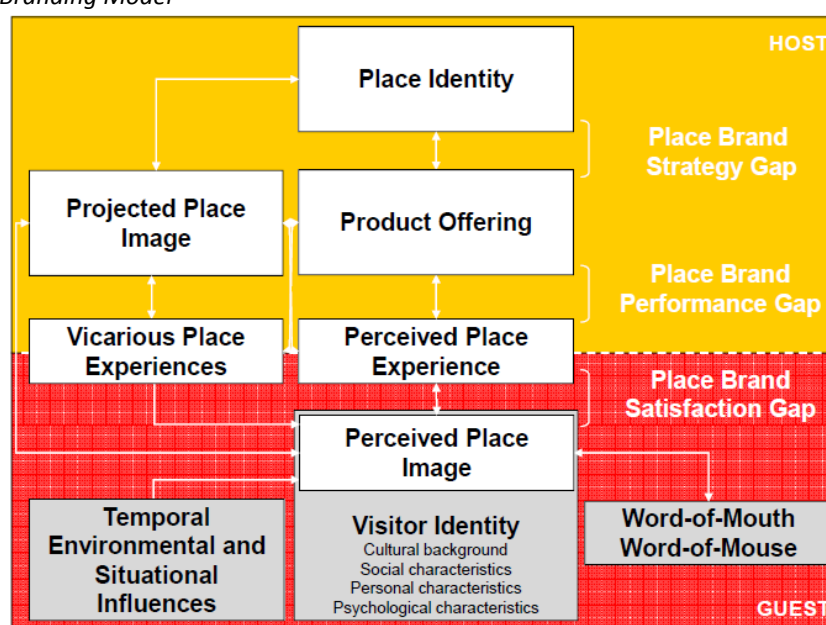
Different levels of destination brands exist (national, regional, city). Dinnie (2008), for example, mentions nation-brand identity and image. The key components of nation-brand identity are “History, Language, Territory, Political regime, Architecture, Sport, Literature, Art, Religion, Education system, Icons, Landscape, Music, Food & drink, Folklore” and these are communicated through multiple means: Branded exports, Sporting achievements, The diaspora, Marketing communications, Brand ambassadors, Cultural artefacts, Government foreign policy, Tourism experience, Prominent personalities (Dinnie, 2008). For example, as André (2011) notes, many destinations employ a regional brand as an umbrella under which they can promote tourism in their area, closely linking it to their identity, especially cultural.

Some authors performing brand identity studies classify the main elements or attributes of brand identity identified in literature into different categories: the natural environment (landscape, natural life, beaches, mountains, climate, etc.), the atmosphere (peace, fun, nightlife, etc.), the infrastructures (monuments, safety, accommodation, transport, etc.), the economic situation (business sectors, value for money, economic development), and sociocultural aspects (sense of community, friendliness and hospitality, cultural traditions and activities, gastronomy, etc.), amongst others (El Aouni et al., 2013). In this classification we see that the socio-cultural aspects of identity are one of the groups within the classification but they are not given any special relevance. In this respect, we believe that cultural or ethnic identity must also be especially distinguished from general brand attribute-based identity, due to its particular characteristics and importance.

Murphy et al. (2007) emphasize the concept of brand personality which relates the values of the brand to the values of the tourist personality. The authors mention Ekinci's (2003) model in which "the destination image is made up of three components: the overall image, the destination brand and, within the destination brand, brand personality. The destination image is then linked to the tourist's self-image" (as cited in Murphy et al., 2007). Murphy et al. (2007) even argue that often the brand "personality" or identity elements relate to the tourists' personality and own identity thus creating a tight identification of both.

If we regard **branding as a strategy** for destinations, different strategies must be undertaken depending on the context, the moment of tourist experience and on what they are promoting and the hierarchical position these elements have in tourists' minds. Govers (2010) builds the 3-gap Place Branding Model where he identifies three different situations of the tourist experience where branding strategies should be placed in relation to tourist image and identity (figure 1.2.).

Figure 1.2.
 The 3-gap Place Branding Model



Source: Govers (2010)

These three gaps where branding must act are, for Govers (2010), first, the place brand strategy gap, which is related to how well-matched the product offered is related to the place identity of the destination; then the brand performance gap, which entails how well the identity elements of the brand are transmitted during the experience on-site through multiple products and experiences; and finally the place brand satisfaction gap where the tourist compares the perceived place experience to his or her previous expectations. This is a moment when branding should also incise as it determines the satisfaction of the tourist.

Branding strategies have different levels or hierarchies of scope that should be considered. As Anton (2010) points out, different attractions or elements have different capacities of penetrating into the tourists' image of the destination. Some nodes are hierarchically at the front-door and are well positioned for several reasons and can easily reach the tourists. However, other attractions that may also convey valuable elements of identity are not so present within image and thus need appropriate presentation to become part of visitor

imagery and hence attract tourism (Anton, 2010). In destination or nation branding, “to be effective, the desired image must be close to reality, believable, simple, appealing, and distinctive” (Kotler, 2002).

For Anton (2010), these strategies to highlight certain elements could range from creating narratives enabling the articulation of the sense of resources, suggesting alternatives and ways of usage, guide the contents according to tourists’ characteristics and seduce with playful and educational contents. In general, “tactics for implementing nation branding strategy include the appropriate use of logos, slogans, advertising, public diplomacy, and public relations” (Augustine, 2009). However, “one must consider that wrongly focused strategies cause dissatisfaction of tourist expectations and most importantly problems among social and economic stakeholders and the population, who are in charge of resource Valorisation”; hence policies need to take into account multiple elements affecting visitors’ perception (Anton, 2010). Some of the challenges when trying to implement effective destination branding, and especially nation branding are to Build Off of Existing Strengths and Be Realistic, to address negative images (concerning, for example, violence, corruption or safety) and make use of editorial media (Augustine, 2009).

The branding strategies directed at valuing local identities, always depending on tourists’ perceptions, need to associate tourism with a differentiation strategy providing the brand with contents; this opportunity needs to include the rest of semiologic landscapes in an intelligent and practical manner (Anton, 2010). However, official tourism organizations especially often have blind faith in the power of advertising and much public money is spent on expensive advertising campaigns whilst very little evaluation is made as to their the effectiveness (Dinnie, 2008). In fact, as we have seen, very often there is a gap between brand identity (what in branding refers to the multiple essential elements conforming the brand that are projected) and brand image (what in branding refers to the perceived image the public has, the elements people perceive). Hence, destinations struggle with not being perceived as they would like to by the public (Veenstra, 2012).

A very interesting and paradoxical idea explained by Anton (2010) is that despite globalization, the discovery of territories is often only possible through short visits that do not create a sentimental bond with tourists. Hence, for Anton the operational strategy and response “to this contradiction is to prepare the places to cater for visitor expectations and creating precise interpretations of their identity”. This is important as it outlines a strategy of identity image projection in tourism where identity transmission while tourists are *in situ* becomes fundamental, and may become the best attempt to influence their perceptions on identity. This view is supported by Mariné-Roig (2011b) who suggests that the best way to project an innovative identity image of a city, based on local values, is while tourists are having their tourist experience on-site.

As a note to this part related to brands and for the following chapters, we wanted to clarify that this research will not adopt a marketing perspective. Indeed, the approach to the content of tourist image from a marketing perspective is very interesting and will surely make an enormous contribution to this research. However, as Hughes (1995) explains, from this perspective both the symbolic elements within image and the interpretation of them made by the individual “are considered in terms other than their market utility”. Moreover, some authors contend that it is “incorrect to associate communicational and marketing terms to realities with their own identity like cities” (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

We believe that different strategies, not only aiming at economic benefit, but also at other social and cultural objectives should be considered when dealing with complex socio-cultural realities such as a destination. Furthermore, branding from a marketing point of view, may be too restrictive in terms of the interpretation of tourist image identity, and this study will move further on and argue in favour of a wide range of purposes and intentions, broader than market utility. Therefore, we will not apply the term “brand” to tourist image and identity in order to achieve a broader perspective of the tourist image phenomenon and its purposes. A brand or a brand identity are concepts oriented towards a purposive action of some stakeholders (local authorities, travel agencies, etc.) to build an image and identity of a place for certain purposes (to attract more visitors and economic interest, self-identification, etc.). However, we consider the reasons to project certain destination images to be much broader, as explained in section 1.2.1.1.1. Moreover, the construction of destination brands may overlook other elements also ascribed to the destination by tourists that are not considered within the intended brand identity or personality. In spite of that, as we shall see later, some brand categories will be used for the analysis as they represent the way the local authorities divide and organize the territory in terms of tourism, and are the clearest referent to compare images and identities.

1.2.2. Perceived image

Once projected tourist image has been addressed, perceived tourist image, the other fundamental element of the tourist image construction circle, must be thoroughly explained.

1.2.2.1. Definition

The perceived image is the overall image of a destination tourists hold in their minds. It is both a subjective individual and a social construct. Perceived tourist image is not just subject to tourists’ individuality, personality and subjectivity, but also dependent on social relationships and shared meanings. As previously mentioned, tourists’ perceptions are conditioned by social and cultural values and structures. Some authors consider that “the essence of destination image studies is to discover how people visualize, think, and feel toward places” (Huong Bui, 2011). The perceived tourist image of destinations has been studied by several researchers (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997; Beerli and Martin, 2004, Galí & Donaire, 2005, among others) but most authors seem to coincide in the difficulty to access perceived image as an object of study, and moreover, in the fact that it has generally been much less studied, and in consequence is less known, if compared to projected image. With the Internet era, and the expansion of user-generated content spaces such as travel blogs, new platforms appear that enable the study of tourist image, and especially of perceived image as we shall see in section 1.3.4.

Perceived tourist image is a fundamental pillar of the tourist image construct, and it can be considered its very same reason for being. The fact that tourists hold (or do not) certain images of places in their minds is what gives sense to the study of tourist image as a social construct. This is the reason why many authors, when defining tourist image, only define it as a construct in the mind of tourists; in fact, “tourist image is very often assimilated to perceived image” (Planas, 2009).

Furthermore, much of the literature defines perceived image as a construct inseparable from the information sources leading to its formation (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997; Gartner, 1993; Molina & Esteban, 2006; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, among others). Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), reading through previous works such as Gartner's (1993), pinpoint the elements intervening in destination perceived image construction and provide the definition that "image generally refers to a compilation of beliefs, and impressions based on information processing from a variety of sources over time, resulting in an internally accepted mental construct". Similarly for Molina and Esteban (2006), "destination image is formed from communication inputs throughout one's lifetime, including suggestions made by family and friends, television programs, movies, books, magazines, guides, brochures, and advertisements. Tourists are exposed to these inputs and retain those messages and images that are important and relevant to them".

What is more, many authors argue that perceived tourist image greatly influences tourism behaviour and decision-making, hence the importance of its study. Image "influences tourism related attitudes and behaviors variously, by confirming/reinforcing existing, creating new, and changing them" (Seaton 1989, as cited in Kim & Richardson, 2003). As Beerli and Martin (2004) point out based on several works, "human behaviour depends more on image than on objective reality. The world is a psychological or deformed representation of objective reality, which resides and exists in the minds of individuals". As people form images of a destination prior to their trips these images become fundamental for destination choice, and thus have been studied throughout the literature. Consumer behaviour research in tourism has focused on "motivations typologies, destination choice, and the decision process itself" (Molina & Esteban, 2006) and many studies have been conducted on the relationship of image, information sources, tourism behaviour and decision-making and destination selection or place preference (Molina & Esteban, 2006; Kim & Richardson, 2003). Kim and Richardson (2003) cite numerous studies on this subject which were conducted in the following areas: components of imagery, relationships between actual visitation and images' effects of geographic distance, influences of news coverage and cultural events, destination images held by tourism and other interest groups (Kim & Richardson, 2003). Molina and Esteban (2006) cite several studies about the influence of information sources on decision-making, about the relationship between image and destination choice, or the influence of information sources or tourist preferences and intentions.

As Richards (2002) explains, "tourists are motivated to visit a destination by information received from a generating marker that matches their needs and wants". Molina and Esteban (2006) precisely, study the interrelation of agents or sources (tourism brochures in their case) provoking image perception and the decision-making process of tourists. One of the major theoretical contributions by Molina and Esteban (2006) has been the creation of a model that integrates the three approaches of the literature on research into tourist behaviour: "information sources forming image, influencing choice of destination, and satisfying needs for information". By integrating three theoretical approaches, the proposed model enables researchers to examine the impacts of brochures and the benefits of information search. It also enables researchers to study how brochure features may influence the behaviour of tourists. Another theoretical implication indicates in general the nature of the relationships between brochure features and how their usefulness is important in the process of destination choice and image formation (Molina & Esteban, 2006). Kim and

Richardson (2003), gather some key ideas about image influencing the decision-making process: perceptions of destinations and purchase decisions are positively correlated and image is a fundamental selection factor.

In this respect, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) explain the process of perceived image development and formation in relation to the information sources influencing it (promotion), the destination selection process and the temporal dimension of the tourist experience. The authors distinguished three stages of destination image formation which are: organic, induced and complex images. First, according to the authors, the organic image is formed in the absence of purposive promotion or marketing behind it, it is an awareness of the destination previous to the introduction of the promotion of the destination and might come from general knowledge or news. Second, induced images are formed when promotions or marketing material are introduced, viewed, and processed by contrasting these new images with organic images. Third, the own experience of or visitation to the destination results in the formation of a complex image which surpasses the two previous (these distinctions are directly linked with the image formation sources or agents and their intentionalities in sections 1.2.1.1. and 1.2.1.1.1.). As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) linked these three types of image to the three functions of promotion: to inform, to persuade, and to remind. Informative materials were hypothesized to be most effective in influencing perceived image at the organic stage, persuasive materials at the induced stage, and reminding materials at the complex stage.

Moreover, perceived image has to be conceived as a complex construct of several elements stemming from both individual and social imaginations. Perceived tourist image is the expression of what the subjects-tourists think about, feel about and associate with a certain place. As Galí and Donaire (2005) explain, it is “at the same time, a subjective construction (that varies from person to person) and a social construction, based on the idea of collective imagination”. In this sense, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), based on other authors’ definitions, define (perceived) tourist image as the “the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place”.

As we can see in the above definition, perceived tourist image is a compound of different elements associated with a destination. Indeed, “a destination’s image is a composite of various products and attributes woven into a total impression” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). The elements that build perceived tourist image are multiple: different attractions (or attraction factors), identity elements (attributes, ideas, values etc.), feelings and functional spatial notions a tourist ascribes to and holds of a destination, etc.

Classifying such elements within image has been an arduous task. As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain, Echtner and Ritchie (1993) proposed a comprehensive, multidimensional definition and measurement approach to destination image and to classify its elements in which destination image consists of three dimensions: attribute-holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique. “The attribute-holistic dimension refers to a continuum of individual elements to an overall impression. For example, a destination’s image is comprised of beliefs about specific attributes such as accommodation, climate, ease of access, etc., as well as a more overall or holistic impression. The functional-psychological dimension distinguishes between the parts of image which are directly observable (e.g., prices) and those which are intangible (e.g., friendliness). The third element, common-

unique, recognizes what is similar about a destination and what is distinctive about it” (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993 as quoted in Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

1.2.2.2. Perceived image components

Probably the most accepted way to understand perceived tourist image has been through what is called the perceived image components. The perceived destination image is created or formed by different components: the cognitive image component, the affective image component (Gartner, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Krizman & Belullo, 2007) and the conative (or behavioural) component (Gartner, 1993). But moreover, as the relationship between tourism and space is indissociable, some authors such as Son (2005) contend that a fourth image component is present: this is the orientation and spatial component which forms the so-called “designative image”. For Son (2005), the cognitive and affective components together form what is called the “appraisive image”.

Hence, a total of four image components of the image tourists have in mind can be identified:

- Cognitive component
- Affective component
- Conative component
- Spatial component

All four of these components or dimensions of perceived destination image may be more or less present depending on the image in question. In this respect, Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) note that the dimensions within tourist image may vary. As the authors put it, “differences in meaning, number, and importance of dimensions may occur” and in this sense “both attention to, and exclusion of, certain destination attributes or symbols can play a part in how destination promotions are perceived” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

The cognitive and the affective components are the two components of perceived image that have been most mentioned and addressed in the tourism-related literature. For many authors, the tourist image construct consists of these two interrelated components “woven into overall impressions” (Krizman & Belullo, 2007). Baloglu and McCleary (1999) note that the global image is a compound of both the perceptual/cognitive and affective evaluations of place, in what Gartner (1986) calls the composite “overall image” formed through the interaction of different attribute-based perceptions of place (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). “Biel (1997) understands the existence of “hard” associations, which refer to the tangible and functional attributes [cognitive component], and “soft” associations, emotional attributes [affective component]” (as in Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

- Cognitive component

The **cognitive component** of perceived image is that resulting from external sources and inputs and is formed by the knowledge of and beliefs about a destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). It can be defined as the “sum of beliefs and attitudes of an object leading to some internally accepted picture of its attributes” (Gartner, 1993). The cognitive component concerns the evaluation, beliefs and knowledge of the (physical) attributes of

the object, in this case the objective attributes of the destination or place (Kim & Richardson, 2003; Krizman & Belullo, 2007). This component is related to rationality and the evaluation of pros and cons.

These external sources may lead to perceived induced images or organic images. Organic images are very powerful images, as they come from sources such as books, independent media, the advice of friends and relatives (offline and online) or one's own previous experience, all very credible sources (especially the two last ones) and "have a great impact on destination image" (Koerte, 2009). Induced images are those produced through information sources making a "conscious effort to develop, promote, and advertise" (Gunn, 1972). This type of sources are less credible as they are more controlled by the destination and its managers. These images are induced by different agents: advertising, local tourism organizations, television adverts, guidebooks, destination businesses, etc. all with their own interests (see also section 1.2.1.1.).

The cognitive component is probably the most well-known component of tourist image, as it has been the most widely studied (Kim & Richardson, 2003). As Kim and Richardson (2003) explain, studies on the cognitive component of image "have focused on the evaluation of physical attributes of places". For Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) the study of "the cognitive component should be expanded to include the process of categorization". This process occurs when an image "is placed into a pre-existing type" in a way that it may expand or stereotype, thus, "intellectual engagement with the image depends on patterns of representation of cultural differences and Western and non-Western destinations" (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

- Affective component

The **affective component** of perceived image is the subjective feelings one has about an object, in this case the destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). It is the "appraisal of the affective quality of feelings towards the attributes and the surrounding environments" (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Furthermore, it is argued that the affective component represents the "motives one has for destination selection" (Gartner, 1993). These motives are based on personal preferences, needs, desires, etc. Destinations are evaluated by tourists on an affective level (Koerte, 2009), that is to say in relation to personal feelings and self-identity.

Koerte (2009) and Baloglu and McCleary (1999) mention the spatial model of eight adjectives that describe the affective image component created by Russell and Pratt (1980). Russell and Pratt (1980) divided adjectives into positive ones (exciting, arousing, pleasant and relaxing) and negative ones (sleepy, distressing, unpleasant and gloomy) round which the affective component of image revolves.

The affective component of image is meaningful as the "cognitive process has already occurred that interpreted (gave meaning to) the emotion" (Russell, 1980 as cited in Kim & Richardson, 2003). For the author, each destination is associated with different affective images. For Russell, (1980) the affective images appear later than cognitive ones, and are the result of the cognitive process of image. As Kim and Richardson (2003) explain regarding the work of Russell (1980), "information about an environment is first interpreted and made meaningful cognitively, then used to categorize the internal, emotional state". Therefore for the authors, as affective images are further processes, "in tourism contexts, evaluation of

affective qualities of places might become even more important than objective, perceptible properties of places”; “studies on affective qualities have focused on emotional responses to places and environmental features” (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Furthermore, for Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) “the affective component should include the notion of difference, which addresses value-based responses to images that fit or do not fit stereotypes of destinations”. For the author such distinction enables deepening in the understanding of the sometimes contradictory or inconsistent interpretation of images. The aspect of positiveness or negativeness of the image, which is related to feelings, has been studied by authors such as Govers et al. (2007a) who detected some negative image components in a destination’s image and stress the importance of their study and consideration by tourist authorities at the destination.

- Conative component

The **conative (or behavioural)** image component is the one that relates the perceived image to specific decisions and behaviours of the tourist, it is a “decision-making component” (Koerte, 2009). This component was proposed by Gartner (1993) and is mainly an element of action, attached to behaviour. The conative image component becomes evident after the affective and cognitive components have been processed. Conative images only appear after gathering, analysing and evaluating cognitive and affective images. Such analysis of different options pushes the individual to take a decision or action, and then this action-bound component of image appears.

As is already explained, many authors such as Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Kim and Richardson (2003), Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), Krizman and Belullo (2007) and Stepchenkova (2009), coincide that perceived images influence, and are a key factor in, both the travel behaviour, the decision-making process or destination choice by potential tourists, and the degree of satisfaction with the tourist experience. As Krizman and Belullo (2007) explain, image affects the “choice of holiday destination” as image fulfils the gap in knowledge potential tourists have of a destination, and the “after-decision behavior” such as satisfaction and intention to revisit it. Beerli and Martin (2004) noted in Mansfeld’s (1992) research that the purpose of secondary information sources is to “fulfill three basic functions in destination choice: to minimize the risk that the decision entails, to create an image of the destinations, and to serve as a mechanism for later justification of the choice”. As drawn from Um and Crompton’s (1999) study, very often tourists have limited knowledge of the destination they intend to visit; they often only know what has been told to them through media, friends and relatives. Therefore, they compare and take into account several images of alternative destinations, and at this point image becomes a determinant or critical factor in destination choice (Um & Crompton, 1999).

This section is closely attached to the chapter within projected image of agents’ intentionality, see 1.2.1.1.1). It is as if we were looking at the same phenomenon from two different perspectives, that of agents or information sources and that of tourists. The information sources’ intentionality is to influence tourists’ image perception and provoke certain actions or behaviours. And in this sense, tourists’ perceptions (especially the conative component of image) which affect their choices and attitudes, result in part from the action of information sources and agents. Molina and Esteban (2006) argue that the influence of

image on decision-making and destination selection is very high. In fact, the authors conclude that “destination image, at least as measured here [in their study], is one the main cause for tourists to choose their destination” (Molina and Esteban, 2006). “Therefore, to decode the narrative structures which animate tourist advertisements contributes to understanding the code which determines touristic behaviour” (Urbain, 1989).

As we can see the conative component is the one directly relating tourists’ behaviour and decision-making to image (as explained previously), and it must be seen as an image posterior to and resulting from the cognitive and affective images.

As Kim and Richardson (2003) extract from Gartner’s (1993) work, it is “the interrelationship of cognitive and affective image components eventually determines the predisposition for visiting a destination”. This interrelationship is embodied in the resulting conative or behavioural image directly related to action and decision-making. Therefore, it would seem that studying the conative or decision-making component of image requires a deep study of both cognitive and affective components. However, some authors identify a major weak point in the perceived image studies in relation to decision-making. It seems that most studies focus on the cognitive component or tangible qualities of places (Kim & Richardson, 2003) by identifying “the dominant attributes of image and exploring their role in selection” (Molina & Esteban, 2006).

Concerning the latter, Kim and Richardson, (2003) claim that, because of their importance, both cognitive and affective images should be studied to shed light on tourists’ decision-making process. Therefore their study intends to answer to this research gap and measure both components, thus suggesting that “both cognitive and affective images can influence destination perceptions, indicating that researchers need to consider both components” (Kim & Richardson, 2003). It seems of great interest, then, that research targets not just study the affective and cognitive images, but also their interrelated conative component. In this sense, authors such as Stepchenkova et al. (2009) study the cognitive, affective and conative components to reveal their influence on travel choices. Furthermore, Molina and Esteban (2006) suggest that tourists’ desired experiences and obtained satisfaction should also be studied, apart from the attributes of places, to understand the decision-making process (so related to the conative component).

- Spatial or orientational component

The concept of a **spatial or orientational component** of image was proposed by Son (2005) who terms it “designative image”. This component of image is the one that relates images to space, to locations. Designative images are someone’s “knowledge of what is where in the environment” and could be conceptualized as “mental maps” about a place, usually studied through sketch maps (Son, 2005). In this sense the spatial image component is the one that attributes certain cognitive, affective and even conative images to certain places or destinations. This image component is related to the visibility or invisibility of places within tourist image perception. Tourist spaces are constructed and at the same time perceived on a spatial basis. The spatial or orientational component of image is strongly bound to tourists’ behaviour. As Son (2005) explains, mental maps are useful to predict where people want to go and what they want to do at the destination.

As Golledge and Stimson (1997) explain, by the early 1960s, a growing number of geographers realized that, in order to exist in and comprehend a given environment, people had to learn about critical subsets of information from the mass of experiences open to them. They had to sense, store, record, organize and use bits of information for coping with everyday life, and moreso when doing tourism.

Probably the best known and foundational works on the spatial component on (tourist) images are those of K. Lynch (1960), with his book called "The image of the city". For the author, the perception of our environment is partial, discontinuous, and fragmented. It is thus subjective and hence the image we obtain from it is the combination of multiple elements in action in our environment; besides it is also collectively shared, as coincidence in spatial images occurs with members of the same socio-cultural group. As Lynch (1960) explains, everybody creates linkages to certain locations and the image of these places is replete of resources and meaningful connotations. Tourist perception cannot be detached from places and space, as the tourist's *raison d'être* is that of spatial movement. Son (2005) speaking about Lynch's (1960) work explains that this spatial image that individuals hold gives the city identity, structure and meaning.

For Lynch (1960) knowing how "legible" a space or urban landscape is, that is to say, how easily someone can recognize and organize certain parts of it in a coherent pattern is of special importance. This is because, the spatial mental image or "legibility" of space (of a destination, for example) is formed along with immediate sensation and previous experiences, to interpret information and to orient action. Indeed, spatial or environmental image has as an original function to enable mobility directed at attaining a certain objective, it organizes facts and possibilities and, furthermore, can act as an organizer of activity (Lynch, 1960).

For the author an effective image requires to be distinctively identified (have a separate identity from others), so this image must include a spatial relation or pattern with respect to the observer and to other objects. Finally this object must have some practical or emotive significance for the observer. An effective environmental image can, for instance, confer a strong sensation of emotional security to its possessor. Therefore, Lynch (1960) studies for three different cities the collective image (common aspects of the mental image) of their inhabitants through techniques of mental mapping and interviews. These collective spatial images enable the subject to act adequately in his/her environment and to cooperate with other subjects. The five main spatial elements contained in the cities' image found by Lynch (1960) were: paths, borders, districts, nodes and landmarks, all interrelated and acting together in certain contexts. Moreover, people organize space in mental images according to different levels (streets, quarters, metropolitan regions, etc.) and to different points of view, time of the day or season.

As works such as "Spatial behaviour: a geographic perspective" (Golledge & Stimson, 1997) explain, human behaviour, choice and decision-making are highly conditioned by space or the "operational environment" in many ways. In fact, the authors explain that behaviour-space perception affects the activation of the decision-making process. The part of the operational environment of which a person is aware is what the authors call "perceptual environment". This perception can be expressed through cognitive maps (Golledge & Stimson, 1997). As the authors explain, understanding the perceptual and cognitive processes that create this "image of operational environments" has received much attention

from behavioural geographers. The functionalist approach sees that perception serves a function the accomplishment of which leads individuals to convert information into meaningful terms; perception identifies something and anticipates its properties and serves to guide action. Another approach is to see perception as an encoding process. It has been argued that the environment can be regarded as a mass of “to whom it may concern” messages meaning that we select what concerns us. This implies that “the amount of information we are capable of encoding depends on the extent to which the concepts or categories with which we are familiar are elaborated and differentiated sufficiently one from another” (Golledge & Stimson, 1997).

Golledge and Stimson (1997) identify several factors influencing the nature and structure of the perceptual environment. These are: the scale in perception, the perceptual thresholds, the perceptual focusing or attention, the preparatory sets, the individual needs and values, the cultural values, ecological and anthropocentric constraints, the location and orientation of individuals, as factors influencing the spatial component of image, the perceptual constancy. They also see another factor in the tendency humans have to perceive a “world of identifiable things” made to their measure which enables them to have stable, enduring and consistent images. Finally, they stress the role of the attitude of the person, his/her values and stereotypes, his/her motivations and emotions, and his/her risk perception and judgement as determinant factors of the formation of this component (1997). All these factors are applicable to people in a foreign environment during tourist trips. Usually the spatial perception of places is quite different if we compare residents and visitors, as the results of Nasar (1979) support (as cited in Golledge and Stimson, 1997).

Some authors such as Brown (1992) see that tourist activity and the relationship between places and experiences is mediated by symbols and physical experiences. Such symbols are, for us, to a great extent embodied in tourist images, which serve as a link from space to image. Therefore, tourists have symbolic images of places, also with a spatial character, which influence their experiences and that form such spatial component of perceived image. As McCabe and Stokoe (2004) note from postmodern theory, “place is examined not as a static, *a priori* or objective phenomenon but as ongoingly and dynamically constructed” (Lefebvre, 1991 as cited in McCabe & Stokoe, 2004).

1.2.2.3. Factors influencing perceived image formation and interpretation

As we have seen, perceived image is a complex construct that is influenced by multiple factors (social factors, personal factors the tourist experience itself, etc.). Due to the implications of perceived image for tourism decision-making and satisfaction, for cultural identity relationships and identity affirmation, for the destinations’ development and reputation, etc., “researchers have identified several factors shaping the images that tourists hold of destinations” (Mercille, 2005). It is very important to understand these factors influencing perceived destination image. “Knowing how image is formed is integral to strategizing how to create, enhance, or change it” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

This issue has been addressed by some authors. Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) study the factors influencing how people interpret visuals. The authors explain that “there are processes and factors mediating the degree of potential overlap. Discerning the source(s) of variation has important implications for image formation theory and image marketing application”. Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) also note from Lyons’s (1983) work that these

differences in interpretation of visuals can be attributed to differences in the pictures being evaluated, differences in the persons doing the evaluating, or some interaction between these. Moreover, “findings from several studies suggest that both personal variables, such as demographics, culture, and familiarity, as well as attributes of the visual, such as physical features, are relevant to image assessment” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). The authors also acknowledge factors such as complexity in visuals as a factor influencing destination image perception. Complexity is mentioned as a possible issue influencing how people perceive visuals and their preferences. Complexity refers to the number of different elements perceived present in a visual or an image. For the authors “Image is subjective knowledge”. The symbolic interpretation and evaluation of image are plural and multiple, in spite of how consistent or controlled these visuals are (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) explain that the factors influencing destination image formation are: in the first place, personal factors; after that the image of the destination and finally stimulus factors or information sources. They also acknowledge that previous visitation or direct experience of a destination is likely to modify the image of the destination. As Krizman and Belullo (2007) gather from multiple studies, image is basically formed by two major forces: stimulus factors (such as information sources, previous experience and distribution) and personal factors (both social and psychological). Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) “explore how potential tourists interpret representations in terms of familiarity and desirability, and whether stereotypes influence interpretation”. The authors contend that politics of representation must be considered to understand how tourists deconstruct destination images. Kim and Richardson (2003) studied how much viewing a specific popular motion picture on a destination altered the cognitive and affective images of it, familiarity with it and interest in visiting it. The role of empathy in explaining changes in perception was also explored by the authors.

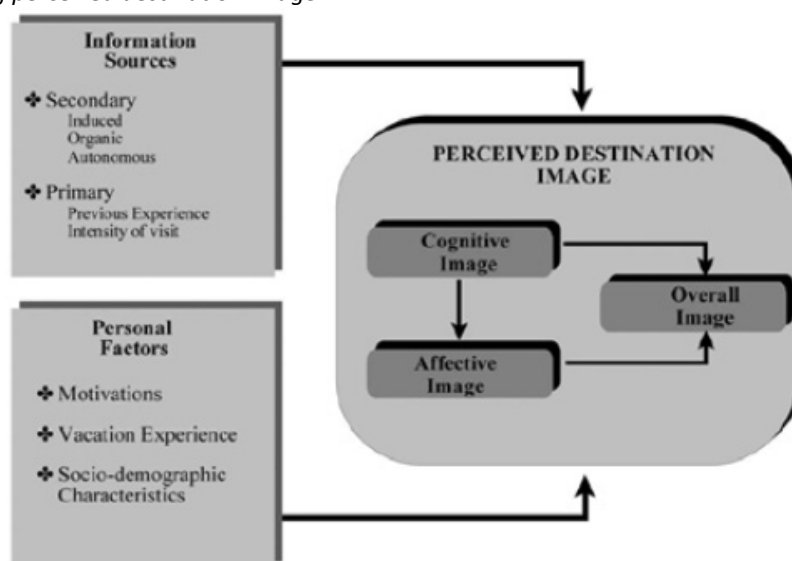
Indeed, the majority of authors seem to coincide that both external sources of information and internal factors, such as personal characteristics, influence the perception of tourist images. As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain, image formation models usually correspond to either person-determined (organic) or destination-determined (induced) image. “Person-determined image reflects the individual differences in information processing and interpretation, whereas destination-determined reflects the actuality of the destination” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). However, we think that destination-determined image does not necessarily reflect the *actuality* of the destination and it should be seen in which sense each actor reflects such actuality. There is no single view or perception of a destination, nor a single identity.

Some authors have created comprehensible and visual diagrams of the factors influencing perceived destination image. In this sense Beerli and Martin (2004) built up a very useful diagram pin-pointing these factors.

According to Beerli and Martin (2004), the factors influencing perceived destination image formation are two, as seen in figure 1.3:

1. Information sources (divided into secondary and primary sources of information) and
2. Personal factors (divided into motivations, vacation experience and socio-demographic characteristics).

Figure 1.3.
Factors influencing perceived destination image



Source: Beerli & Martin (2004)

Other authors such as Krizman and Belullo (2007) and Koerte (2009) work upon Beerli and Martin's (2004) diagram and extend it. Krizman and Belullo (2007) build a similar model based on Beerli and Martin's (2004) work and in elements from Baloglu and McCleary, (1999). Krizman and Belullo (2007) identify two main categories of elements influencing destination image formation. The first factor: stimulus factors is more or less equivalent to the information sources in Beerli and Martin (2004), but the authors introduce some nuances: apart from stimulus factors the authors consider their amount and type, as well as their distribution. The second factor: personal factors is also equivalent to the "personal factors" proposed by Beerli and Martin (2004) but Krizman and Belullo (2007) divide the personal factors into two: social (age, education, marital status, others) and psychological factors (values, motivations, personality). All in all, the elements of both models are essentially similar, it is just a slight question of perspective. Both Beerli and Martin (2004) and Krizman and Belullo (2007) agree that both cognitive and affective images lead to the overall perceived image of a destination.

It is interesting to see that what we call stimulus factors or information sources refers to what we consider projected image (the information sources are the actors projecting image, from the destination itself to the own previous experience of the tourist, which is transmitted through certain distribution channels).

In the following points, such factors will be developed following Beerli and Martin's (2004) general diagram, but other relevant factors and aspects influencing perceived image formation not gathered in the previous scheme will be added.

The first factors to consider are the **Information sources** which are composed of Secondary and Primary sources. This first distinction between primary information and secondary information is already established by Lowenthal (1961) in his essay on the cognition of reality. As Hughes (1995) remarks in different literature (Lowenthal, 1961; Smith, 1985; Robinson, 1989), "there is an attempt to distinguish between direct and vicarious

experience”, however, according to the author, nowadays this distinction becomes ambiguous, as popular knowledge and experiences are always mediated by information sources (television, advertising, print, etc.). This is consistent with the notion that information sources and varying attributes of destinations form the basis for different experience expectations, image, and level of satisfaction (Molina & Esteban, 2006).

The secondary and primary sources of perceived image formation will be presented in this order, first secondary and then primary as the former are external, less influential sources and the latter are more influential direct sources.

1.2.2.3.1. Secondary information sources

Secondary sources create and transmit induced, organic and autonomous images prior to the actual visitation to the destination. These secondary sources have the purpose of directing destination choice and creating certain images. Secondary information is that obtained from indirect sources which provide a different type of experience (Lowenthal, 1961). As Molina and Esteban (2006) gather from various literature, “most behavior models incorporate the search of external information as an important component”. Information sources are one among many forces or agents that influence the tourism destination image formation and they are usually categorized into organic and induced (Krizman & Belullo 2007). Organic sources do not have a vested interest in promoting a tourism destination, while induced sources are means of communicating marketing messages of the tourism destination and suppliers to a chosen travel audience (Krizman & Belullo, 2007).

It is generally accepted that information sources play an important role in image formation and perception. In other words it is accepted that “representations shape image” (Mercille, 2005). For Gartner (1993), the sort and quantity of stimuli received from information sources influence the cognitive component of image. Um and Crompton (1990) argue that the perceptual/cognitive evaluation of attributes is generated by external factors including different information sources such as symbolic stimuli (promotional efforts of a destination through media) and social stimuli (friends’ and relatives’ recommendations or word-of-mouth). Dann (1996) explains that sales promotion, publicity and advertising among others create demand for destinations through establishing a positive destination image and generating further enquiries.

Mercille (2005) asserts that different theoretical approaches to the influence of the mass media on tourist image can be placed in a continuum according to the strength of this influence on tourist image perception. “At one end of the continuum are studies arguing that the media are extremely powerful in convincing and indoctrinating the “public”, conceived of as a mass of passive receptors. At the other end of the continuum are studies emphasizing the power of audiences to make their own meanings and to interpret media messages in ways opposed to the intended ones”, resisting domination.

Mercille (2005) found that the image elements present in tourists’ perceptions were dominant elements in the information sources representations, and claims that the latter influenced the former. However, only a few elements, not all, were remembered by tourists, suggesting a partial impact of the sources and that people play an active role in image formation as they “make their own meanings out of media productions”.

Olson McAlexander and Roberts (1986) reported that “visual content of advertisements affects the perception of vacation experience through association of certain types of pictures with certain types of experiences (e.g., natural scenery interpreted as conducive to a romantic vacation)” (as cited in Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) note, what elements are transmitted within destination images may affect what tourists perceive and experience about destinations; for example, portraying natural scenery may involve experiencing nature, and portraying landmarks or historic sites may imply heritage appreciation.

However, some authors find research gaps concerning the influence of information sources on perceived image formation. Mercille (2005), for example, remarks that few studies attempt empirically to study this phenomenon. For Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) most research on image evaluation and perception has been centred on attribute identification, both tangible (sites, attractions, scenery, etc.) and intangible (friendliness, attractiveness, opportunity for adventure, etc.). This view is supported by Molina and Esteban (2006) who explain that many studies concerning destination choice and image formation “have focused upon identifying the dominant attributes of image and exploring their role in selection”. However, the authors point out that other variables related to “desired experiences” and “obtained satisfaction” must be considered when studying destination preferences. Molina and Esteban (2006) explain the notion that information sources and the different attributes of destinations become the ground on which expectations, image and satisfaction are built.

Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) mention the research of Kaplan, Kaplan and Brown (1989) based on landscape aesthetics and environmental perception which has studied image preference through “elements such as color, land form, texture, and sense of openness”. These elements are classified by Kaplan, Kaplan and Brown into four domains of variables: physical attributes, land cover types, informational variables, and perceptual variables. These variables have the dimensions of coherence, complexity, legibility and mystery, which involve both the image and the perceiver.

Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride (2002) contend that what makes information sources’ images more influential is their belonging to a salient and coherent brand and “claim that the creation of brand saliency—the development of an emotional relationship with the consumer through highly choreographed and focused communication campaigns—holds the key to destination differentiation” (as cited In Murphy et al.,2007).

Now some elements attached to secondary sources will be explained as aspects influencing destination image perception and formation.

- Stereotypes as factors influencing perceived image

Within secondary sources, and the influence of the image projected by the different agents, stereotypes play a very important role (see more on stereotypes in section 1.2.1.2.2.). Although they are part of the image projected by the secondary sources mentioned before, the fact that they are part of the social imaginary and structure of agents, tourists and the population, thus influencing the very same tourist experience, confers special entity to them and deserves to be addressed alone as a perceived image formation factor.

It seems that pre-existing stereotypes condition and mediate the tourist experience and how the tourists perceive it. Projected tourist images often reinforce existing stereotypes at a

destination, as they create underlying structures of representation and interpretation of places, cultures and peoples. Stereotypes create expectations as to what a certain culture should look like or how locals should behave. Indeed, “images incorporated in marketing destinations set up a genre of myths and expectations that influence how cultures are perceived and interpreted” (Selwyn, 1996 as in Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). What tourists see, experience, and learn about the cultures they visit is often conditioned by existing structures of image representation and interpretation of cultural others, which can re-affirm stereotypes rather than break them down” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). As the authors’ results suggest, “pre-existing stereotypes are not dismantled by actual experiences, but instead serve as standards against which the visited culture is evaluated”. “Stereotyping can be so strong that it can lead a tourist to see something that is not there” (Laxson, 1991 as cited in Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). However, Ansager and Drzewiecka (2002) acknowledge that although stereotypes have implications in the perception of cultural identity differences, it is inevitable for humans to classify information into *types*. “Destination images might be products of typing or stereotyping” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). When dealing with the issue of stereotypes in perceived image formation, the authors emphasize the effect the desire for a cultural essential or inherent difference may have in how tourists perceive and interpret the destination and its culture. As found in their first study “when respondents generalized descriptions of the people who lived in the destinations pictured more from their own preconceived ideas than what they saw in the photos”. “This apparently strong influence of stereotypes, even when potential tourists are wrong about the destination they believe they are viewing, suggests that stereotypes confound perceptions of familiarity—something that tourist images could easily exploit but may find difficult to combat” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

The extemporary nature of stereotypes in the minds of people may be very negative for local destinations and cultures when destinations are perceived. Stereotypes are extremely difficult to change as they are widely implanted and well-known in human minds and expand throughout society by their own inertia. They are the first references that usually come to one’s mind, when thinking of other people’s cultures. If stereotypes have negative connotations they may be very harmful for the destination and its inhabitants. “The exaggerated, negative image cannot be simply dismantled by a positive representation, because the idealized and unrealistic image is already part of the stereotypical image that the Other can never achieve” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002). This has to do with the search for an essentialized difference where place identity must be different to the tourist identity, where stereotypes of cultural identity within image function in a way that “Self and Other are mirror-images in which the latter is everything self is not” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

- Message

Some studies suggest that the way a certain message is transmitted differently influences the perceived image formation. Mercille (2005), studying the direct impact of different communication sources on perceived images, found that the format of the message (e.g. movie or guidebook) did not represent a significant difference in the influence it exerted on shaping destination image (as long as the message was similar). Instead, findings supported that message repetition (such as being exposed to different information sources with similar/homogenous messages) “increases the impact of media representations on image”.

The author then confirms the hypothesis of Hall which is that “audiences decode messages in terms of the reference code in which they have been encoded by producers”. Despite the important influence of information sources on destination representations or destination image formation, we acknowledge that “media effects are not deterministic or homogeneous”. “The cultural and social background of each individual must be taken into account to understand the differences in interpretations and decoding of messages” (Mercille, 2005).

- Socio-cultural relationships dimension

The model of image formation of Beerli and Martin (2004), which is in turn based on Baloglu and McCleary’s (1999) model, seems to lack a dimension where socio-economic and political relationships and positioning of the actors can be seen as influent on perceived image formation.

Andsager and Drzwiecka (2002) make a criticism of the model of Baloglu and McCleary (1999), which is the model presented above, in which “the overall image is formed by perceptual/cognitive and affective evaluations, which are in turn shaped by variety and type of information sources, age, education, and sociopsychological motivations” (Andsager and Drzwiecka (2002). The authors contend that such a model does not take into account a fundamental social dimension of tourist image formation, it “does not account for race relations, perceptions of the Other, and representation of cultural differences in its explanation of image formation and marketing”. For the authors, the factors influencing destination image formation of the model are thought from an individualistic standpoint and derived from a specific social context, and hence do not include how for instance different information sources proceeding from western and non-western contexts would differently influence image formation. In their study, Andsager and Drzwiecka (2002) support the view of Urry (1990) who argues that “tourist gaze is socially organized and systematized”. “Although many exist, based in different societies and historical periods, each gaze is constructed through difference” (Andsager and Drzwiecka (2002). That is, it is “constructed in relationship to its opposite, to non-tourist forms of social experience and consciousness” (Urry, 1990).

In this sense, we believe a social dimension considering the different perceptions of the other and the social representations of cultural differences, from different socio-economic and cultural perspectives, should be added in the model of external factors influencing destination image formation.

1.2.2.3.2. Primary information sources

Primary sources consist of previous experience and intensity of visit. As Lowenthal (1961) explains, primary information is that obtained by the individual or tourist through interacting directly with the environment, through direct experience. Word-of-mouth, both online and offline, should be considered in close relation to primary information sources.

- Experience

As Volo (2010b) explains, since the nineteen sixties, and still today, the tourist experience has been a recurrent issue in the tourism literature partly due to the very same nature of the

tourist product which is experiential. Moreover increasing attention is being paid to the experiential side of economy, in which the “consumers’ hearts are captured by the memorial nature and strength of the experience” (Volo, 2010b).

Volo (2010b) gathers several definitions of the tourist experience among which: ‘a complex combination of factors that shape the tourist’s feeling and attitude towards his or her visit’ (Page et al., 2001); ‘the experience essence’ that happens in the mind of the tourists and does not relate to any particular product or service, rarely happens on command and it is very subjective, and the ‘experience as offering’ that heavily relies on services, products, attractions on the marketplace (Volo, 2009); ‘an example of hedonic consumption’ (Go, 2005) (all as cited In Volo, 2010b). As Volo (2010b) explains, Cohen in his phenomenological approach, saw tourist experiences as opportunities for differentiation from everyday life (Cohen, 1972, 1979), and he identified ‘different modes of the tourists’ experiences’ (Cohen, 1979 as cited in Volo, 2010b).

Volo (2010b) approaches the study of experience from the experience essence conception. This conceptualization defines the tourist experience “as an occurrence experienced by a person outside the ‘usual environment’ and the ‘contracted time’ boundaries that is comprised of a ‘sequence’ of the following events: sensation, perception, interpretation, and learning”. This approach of “experience essence” differs from that of “experience offering”. “Experience essence” emphasizes the ability of the individual to create his or her own experience, in spite of the tourist experience sold by marketers and independently from the type of tourism practised (cultural, urban, sport or natural tourism); it is a unique experience. In contrast, the “experience as offering” consists of the different components and activities in which tourists are engaged while on holiday, and which may lack one or more of the steps in the experience sequence (Volo, 2009 as cited in Volo, 2010).

Tourist experience is a complex process. “Clearly, (potential) tourists are not just after experiences that take them out of their everyday lives. Rather, they appear to be interested in contexts that allow them to avoid dealing with “cultural” difference and lower-class struggles. These insights suggest that familiarity may not be a simple concept when it applies to tourism” (Andsager & Drzwiecka, 2002).

As Beerli and Martin (2004) point out, not just what has been experienced conditions how tourists’ perceived image is formed, but also the intensity of the visit, or “how” it has been experienced needs to be taken into account. Hence, when analysing tourism experiences it is not just a matter of knowing what a tourist has done or felt to deduce how his/her image will be influenced, but also a question of how he/she has lived it, what meaning a certain event has had for him/her. For example, the very same ride in a rollercoaster at a tourism theme park may not be as intense for one person as for another; two people sitting side by side in the same rollercoaster wagon may not have the same experience at all: one may enjoy the ride, the other may be terrified by it.

- Contact with, uses and characteristics of place

We suggest that this aspect needs to be added in relation to primary sources. Indeed, as tourism is an experiential activity which implies tourists’ mobility to a certain place with certain characteristics, we believe that one of the primary sources for perceived image formation is actually the contact with place itself, the uses tourists perform in that place and its physical characteristics. Questions about what the place is like, and how it is perceived to

be by tourists, who uses the place according to certain premises of “lifestyles”, are fundamental. Is it a nature place? Is it a coastal resort? Is it a village surrounded by a rural landscape? Is it a busy big city? and so on. Although we have explained the “real” place itself, this may not be the most relevant for tourism as the important aspect is how tourists perceive this place, how they construct it in their mind, we cannot forget that such mental construction is influenced by actual physical characteristics of place, by place identity (see also section 1.2.1.2.1. “Relationship of represented identity and place identity”) that tourists get in touch with (interacting with and influenced by expectations, mediated meanings, subjective perceptions, uses of space, etc.).

As McCabe and Stokoe (2004) explain “the experiential and cultural significance of places and the function of the environment in identity construction have been examined across a range of disciplines”. From the article by McCabe and Stokoe (2004) we can extract the idea that both identities of places are created through tourists’ uses and images, and also tourists’ own identities are created through tourism spatial practices (lifestyles) and social identification with them. “The changing nature and character of places, together with adapting modes of leisure consumption and commercialization of locales, has shifted the ways in which meanings are attached to places” (McCabe & Stokoe, 2004). Places, and the uses tourists and locals perform in them change overtime (partly due to the tourists themselves and their actions) and this influences the meanings tourists attach to places, the images they hold of them, what they perceive.

1.2.2.3.3. Personal factors

Personal factors consist of personal motivations, the actual vacation experience, and the socio-demographic characteristics of the tourist. “Generally, differences in interpretation of visuals can be attributed to differences in the pictures being evaluated, differences in the persons doing the evaluating, or some interaction between these” (Lyons, 1983 as cited in Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

- Demographic, geographic and circumstantial variables

Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) acknowledge the extended literature on both advertising and landscape preference literature pointing to demographic variables as a fundamental factor of how visuals are evaluated. Koerte (2009) notes from Baloglu and McCleary’s (1999) work that age and education are the most important socio-demographic characteristics that affect how one perceives image according to previous research. Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) also acknowledge the importance of age as a significant variable for image interpretation. “The sociodemographic characteristics of travelers influences both the affective and cognitive components especially when considering the age, gender, level of education, and social class” (Koerte, 2009). As noted by Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), authors such as Macia (1979) and Lyons (1983) investigated “the effects of age and gender as influences on landscape preferences; these studies found, for example, that children had higher preference ratings for the landscapes shown than did elderly subjects”. In summary, Palmer (2005) explains that the interpretation of cultural or iconic monuments or locations is contested as it is influenced by “gender, class, religion, and region”.

Richards (2002) points out that circumstantial aspects such as available time, economic resources, distance travelled and travel form influence tourism behaviour. Income may also be of major importance for perceived image formation. Richards's (2002) results indicate a strong relationship between the geographical origin of tourists, their demographic characteristics, travel form and use of markers, aspects greatly influencing perceived image formation. A very interesting issue in relation to the geographical variables of the tourist is the distance between the home residence of the user (or tourist) and the destination location. Some studies examined the relationship between tourists' geographical location (distance) and image, some of them focusing on the impact of images on tourism behaviour and decision-making in keeping with geographic distance (Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1979; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Richards, 2002).

Fakeye and Crompton (1991) contended that the greater the travel distance, the less knowledge tourists are expected to have about the destination. As we can draw from the work of Richards (2002) it seems that tourists from nearby places will be more familiar with the destination, having a wider vision of it, and that tourists from faraway places will tend to concentrate more on must-see sites; Likewise, those staying for short periods of time might be expected to concentrate on the must-see sites of the destination, focusing on narrower aspects of the destination. These aspects will influence the perceived image formation as it seems that the further the home residence of the tourist is from the destination, or the shorter time they spend at it, the more likely tourists are to have a shallower, distorted, idyllic, or at least stereotyped image of the destination. Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain that "research has found a positive correlation between distance from a destination and the image of it (Telisman-Kosuta, 1989). The farther away the destination, the more likely the image is favourable (Crompton, 1979)" (as cited in Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997). "This distance factor is related to decreasing opportunity for actual visitation which may include negative experiences" (Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997).

Especially before the trip, the tourist has probably received vague and idealized ideas of the destination. In addition, the way people understand other places, and especially distant ones, is by recurring to preconceived general ideas, very often stereotypes, which simplify the idea of the place and that enable us to identify multiple places. The farther the place in question is, probably the more stereotyped the image in the mind of tourists will be. "...The further away the audiences are from the direct experiences of metropolitan life the more likely they are to construct "imagined worlds" which are chimerical, aesthetic, even fantastic objects, particularly if assessed by the criteria of some other perspective, some other "imagined world"" (Appadurai, 1990 as cited in Hugues, 1995).

- Familiarity

One of the aspects that is said to influence destination image formation is the familiarity of tourists with the destination. How familiar a place results to tourists (either by image exposure or actual visitation) seems to influence how an image of a destination is then formed. However, the notion of familiarity, what a tourist considers to be familiar, is not yet clear. Interesting studies addressing familiarity in relation to how tourists interpret representations are those of Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997), Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) and Kim and Richardson (2003).

As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain, “familiarity has been proposed as both a positive and negative factor in image evaluation”, either too much unfamiliarity or too much familiarity could lower the attractiveness of the destination depending on the public’s tolerance of uncertainty. The authors contend that familiarity is an important notion to comprehend how people interpret destination representations. In this respect, as Dann (1996) assesses, the language of promotion is a discourse of the imaginary and of images replete with symbols, which carefully tries to direct “a course between the tensions established by strangeness and familiarity”.

For Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) familiarity is related to desirability and to the influence stereotypes exert on this interpretation of reality. “The notion of familiarity seems to be connected with attractiveness and affective responses. However, it is also useful to question what exactly individuals believe when they rate a particular destination image as familiar. It is quite possible that they are aware of myths and stereotypical representations of a particular place, and images that conform to expectations and/or are perceived as attractive are evaluated as familiar, even though or precisely because they are different”. “Those unfamiliar with the destination engaged in cognitive evaluation, whereas those familiar employed affective evaluation”. The findings of the authors suggest that familiarity is strongly connected to the socio-demographic characteristics of the tourist and must be thought “as articulated through race, class (and, more broadly, economic status and industrialization), and urbanity”. Moreover, “notions of familiarity appear to be grounded in stereotypes” and in preconceived ideas, to the point that “stereotypes confound perceptions of familiarity” (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002).

Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) consider that the concepts of familiarity and unfamiliarity are complex and therefore deserve further investigation and wider approaches including such complexity. For the authors the concepts of cultural familiarity and difference cannot be detached from the elements Selwyn (1996) points out: the political, economic and cultural centre-periphery, consumerism, commodification and the quest for the authentic. For the authors the “differences are defined from positions of privilege. The notion of centre-periphery suggests that the politics of racial and class difference and representation are of primary importance. Cultural unfamiliarity is signified by race and class”.

The study by Kim and Richardson (2003) measured the influence of being exposed to an information source (watching a film) on the empathic involvement and familiarity with the destination portrayed. The authors found that visualizing the film did not increase the degree of familiarity with the destination and that the level of empathic involvement with the film characters was not significantly related to the affective or cognitive image components, nor to the sense of familiarity with the destination. Kim and Richardson (2003) explained these unexpected results arguing that, on the one hand, fictional depictions of places might not enhance psychological closeness and that other factors (behavioural and attitudinal components, visitation, word of mouth) may be more influential on familiarity; on the other, the authors contended that a short exposure to information sources might not be salient enough to change the level of familiarity. As observed by Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) in the literature, familiarity has been related to a more realistic impression of the destination built upon experience.

Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) talk about the work of Evans (1976) who explained that tourists are strangers in a host society who desire a temporary change. Their familiarity with

a place changes according to the degree with which they embrace “the novelty of the macroenvironment of a strange place from the security of a familiar microenvironment.” As explained by Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002), according to Evans, individual tastes, preference, and experience determine how much familiar culture, he, the tourist, must carry with him. Such a concept of familiarity embodied in the actual tourist-host interaction can be measured and is influenced by: a) time (length and intensity of stay in the host community play a role in the counteraction of national stereotypes), b) space (dynamic physical and social space, segregated spaces (or not) for tourists and residents play a role in such interaction, social space open or closed to foreigners, or controlled by stakeholders also plays a role), c) communication (language misunderstandings, cross-cultural interaction, multilingual signs, attitudes of the hosts towards foreigners), d) cultural elements (shared values, attitudes and experiences provide a measure of cultural consistency, empathy, inter-classist empathy is more difficult).

Today with the new technologies the notion of familiarity may radically change as physical distance (if it was before) is not relevant any more. Tourists may become familiar with the destinations through user-generated contents online. The process of familiarization with destinations (previous to the trip) could be very effective as the contact with the destination is provided through specific real experiences of people, thus knowing to the detail the anecdotes, the personal feelings, accessing sometimes the more private/personal (but more familiar) parts of tourist experiences that were previously unavailable to the tourists. “It may be that both behavioral and attitudinal components are important to capturing familiarity” (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Other authors point out that factors such as Desirability (Andsager & drzewiecka 2002 or Complexity (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997) also have an influence on perceived image formation.

- Expectations-satisfaction

Tourists in general want to fulfil certain needs, which may be the ones proposed by Urbain (1989): to rest, to enjoy oneself and to improve one’s mind. The will to satisfy one or several of these needs through tourism creates certain expectations for tourists, and the accomplishment of such expectations or not will affect their perception and satisfaction with the trip. “Interpretation and meaning of the pictorial element contribute to tourists’ expectations which are used in assessing satisfaction with vacations by comparing what was expected with what was experienced” (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). For Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) the relationship between tourist image perception and consumption and satisfaction is very important.

The role of expectations and subsequent satisfaction in the construction of place image was mentioned by Urry (1990). “Places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is an anticipation.... Such anticipation is constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos, which construct and reinforce that gaze...the viewing of tourist sights often involves different forms of social patterning, with a much greater sensitivity to visual elements of landscape or townscape than is normally found in everyday life. People linger over such gaze which is then visually objectified or captured through photographs, postcards, films, models and so on. These

enable the gaze to be endlessly reproduced and recaptured” (Urry 1990, as cited in Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Papson (1981) explains, the motives underlying the decision to have a holiday and, the selection of a specific destination “is often a synthesis of many needs and desires” that the tourist intends to satisfy. These needs and desires, existing usually prior to the trip itself create a series of expectations. Expectations on tourist destinations may be held on different fields and elements (accommodation, culture, type of experience, weather, image, etc). Molina and Esteban (2006) study “whether information sources meet tourism demands; satisfy their needs; and have any influence on the process of destination selection”. In addition, the authors deal with aspects on tourist behaviour and the influence of information sources on image formation and destination selection. As Richards (2002) puts it, those who find attractions that more closely match their wants, will be more satisfied with their experience.

Specifically on the cultural terrain, Buck (1977) explains that destinations are framed or portrayed in specific ways which serve tourists as a reference to judge or measure experiences of cultural authenticity. Caton and Almeida (2008) pay careful attention to the cultural terrain because having expectations in the cultural field may be dangerous especially when mediated by stereotypes and exoticism. Information sources provide tourists with certain cultural identity representations (made to be attractive) that influence tourists to create certain expectations on how locals should look and behave, on what their culture is. However, these representations, and the resulting expectations, may be more or less accurate, more or less stereotyped, more or less built from a center-periphery or colonial perspective, etc. In this sense local cultures are pressed to change to fulfil tourists’ expectations.

- Self-personality or self-identity

Some authors argue that how well what is experienced suits the tourists’ self-identity or personality will greatly influence how the perceived image of these tourists is formed. Murphy et al. (2007) comment on the concept of self-congruity proposed by Sirgy and Su (2000) which refers to the outcome of a process of matching a tourist’s self-concept to his/her image of the destination. In this context, a consumer’s attitude towards a product (and product purchase) is influenced by how well the product image matches the consumer’s self-concept. Morgan et al. (2002) comment that tourists’ decision-making is often based on how good a product/service is according to their lifestyles or if it provides a desired experience (Morgan et al., 2002).

Murphy et al. (2007) think that within projected images there are the constructions of each tourist’s individuality, of the target audience in mind. In this regard, if the image personality matches the self-personality of the tourists this becomes more influential in image formation. “In the case of tourism, the greater the match between the image a tourist has of a destination, and their self-concept, the more likely it is that the tourist will have a favorable attitude toward that destination resulting in a visit”. The authors even argue that often the brand “personality” or brand identity elements relate to the tourists’ personality and own identity thus creating a tight identification of both. According to Murphy et al. (2007), this connection between self-image and destination image is consistent with Ekinci’s

(2003) arguments in which lifestyle and value systems are key elements in destination choice processes.

Murphy et al. (2007) commenting the work of Palmer (2005) emphasize that “on an individual level, a person may draw upon more than one identity depending upon their personal circumstances”; as the author gathers, these self-identities can be changed like hats to suit the tourists’ mood and the occasion. This has important implications since, as is known, in many cases behaviour and manifest self-identity change completely when people are on vacation.

Hugues (1995), also points out the concept of the authenticity and authentic self in relation to the development of self-identity, and how this may relate to the formation of tourist images. In the process of self-identification, tourists build up a network of images, meanings and myths in relation to places which support such process, therefore, the resulting (perceived) images of destinations and created meanings around them are strongly related to the self-identity of the tourist, and moreover, to the process of self-identification.

- Perceived authenticity

Authenticity is one of the factors influencing perceived image formation. Specifically, tourists’ perceived authenticity is the type of authenticity concept we consider influences destination image formation. If tourists perceive certain sights, objects or experiences as authentic this will influence their perception, their experience and their satisfaction.

Within the eternal “obligato” (Hugues, 1995) subject-debate on authenticity and tourism studies, the type of authenticity playing a role in perceived image formation is perceived authenticity, understood from both a constructionist and an existentialist perspective (and not an objectivist one). Different approaches to authenticity are present: they mostly vasculate between a concept of objective “real” authenticity to a constructionist or subjective one. Wang (1999) differentiates between objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, and existential authenticity. From an objectivist approach authors such as MacCannell (1976) or Cohen (1988) conceive authenticity as being bound to the reality of the place and the tourist object. Constructive authenticity is “something that can emerge or acquire social recognition as authentic” (Cole, 2007), and existential authenticity “a special existential state of being in which individuals are true to themselves” (Wang, 2000). Here we consider both constructive and existential authenticity perceived by tourists, which are the result of a two-way process of “exteriority and interiority relationships” (Amirou, 1995).

Authenticity is something that has its algid point and its *raison d’être* in the minds of tourists, and thus the ultimate relevant aspect of authenticity should be the perceived authenticity by a tourist, what a tourist considers or judges as authentic (Mariné-Roig, 2009). “Authenticity is not a tangible asset but, instead, it is a judgment or value placed on the setting or product by the observers” (Chhabra, 2005). In this sense, authenticity relates to many other concepts that have been developed in this thesis: For example, cultural identity is related to perceived authenticity in the sense that the tourist judges whether he/she thinks a certain identity is real or fake, and such judgment may have important implications for perceived image formation and for the destination itself. Authenticity will matter to tourists in relation to its opposite: in-authenticity (Mariné-Roig, 2009).

Different authors have ascribed a different importance to authenticity as an element playing a role in the tourist experience and tourist image formation. Some authors think authenticity is a central or fundamental element in tourism experiences. MacCannell (1976) claims that tourists seek authenticity within their experiences. However, “many question its [authenticity] usefulness and validity because many tourist motivations or experiences cannot be explained in terms of the conventional concept of authenticity” (Wang, 1999). Contemporary tourism is much more complex than that (Urry, 1991). Thus, we do not agree as MacCannell (1976) proposes, that tourists’ fundamental quest is to find or experience the authenticity from which they are deprived in their shallow daily lives, in a somehow sacralized quest, as many other factors and motivations intervene in the tourist phenomenon.

In spite of this, we do think that many tourists may consider authenticity as an important part of their trip and experience, which will influence their perceived image of the destination and their tourist experiences. Waller and Lea’s (1998) results indicate that tourists do in fact search for authenticity in MacCannell’s sense in some cases and that for some people it is a more important issue than for others, as Pearce and Moscardo (1986) had asserted. Some authors exposed such a multiplicity of tourist motivations and included authenticity; this is the case of Cohen (1979) who proposed that five different motivations for travelling exist: recreational, diversionary, experiential (in which the tourist is seeking an authentic experience), experimental and existential modes. Wang (1999), for example, acknowledges that some types of tourism (ethnic, history and culture tourism) are still based on the concept of object authenticity and the notions of the “other” and “the past”. Others such as Chhabra (2005) citing Revilla and Dodd (2003) explain that “the most important single element in shopping is the authenticity of heritage merchandise”, which we think is a very important element in conforming tourist image. Waller and Lea assert that “considering each scenario separately, there is a positive correlation between perceived authenticity and predicted enjoyment: people who perceive that scenario as more authentic also rate it as more likely to be enjoyable. The same is true between scenarios: those that are seen as more authentic are also seen as more potentially enjoyable” (1998).

Therefore authenticity must be considered a factor influencing destination image formation in different degrees, depending on multiple factors. For some people, being in contact with external sights or experiences perceived by them as “authentic”, or feeling close to the interior authentic-true self through tourism experiences may be an important fact influencing how their image is formed (Mariné-Roig, 2009). Today, many tourists consciously embrace staged sights or experiences (such as Disneyland) but as long as their experiences are authentic to them, or make them feel existentially authentic this will influence the tourist image formation. “Whereas the traveler really searches for authenticity, tourists are happy to be taken in by the tacky settings laid on for them” (Waller & Lea, 1998). In this sense we subscribe to Urry’s (1990) idea that in post-modern societies, authenticity in tourism does not reside in reality but in an interpreted representation of this reality. For example, as Wang (1999) extracts from the work of Cohen (1988) “if mass tourists empathically experience the toured objects as authentic, then, their viewpoints are real in their own right, no matter whether experts may propose an opposite view from an objective perspective”. For other tourists authenticity may not matter at all, but it must be considered an important factor influencing destination image formation for many tourists.

In this matter, it is important to understand why tourists perceive something or some experience as authentic or not, as this will influence the destination image formation process. "Yet there has been little empirical research investigating either what people themselves, as potential tourists, understand by authenticity, or how important it is to them" (Waller & Lea, 1998). Many factors come into play when tourists judge the received images: inner-values, culture, preconceived ideas and social and external stimuli. As Wang (1999) and Reisinger and Steiner (2005) coincide, authenticity is flexible and plural, it is different depending on the tourist type, his/her own definition of it and his/her interpretation and experience.

Constructionists argue that people will interpret authenticity according to social meanings and social structures. Authenticity perception and appreciation of souvenirs, heritage, etc. must be understood within "codes of consumption that are becoming global" (Hugues, 1995). "For constructivists, multiple and plural meanings of and about the same things can be constructed from different perspectives, and people may adopt different constructed meanings dependent on the particular contextual situation or intersubjective setting" (Wang, 1999). From this perspective authenticity is characterized "as a socially constructed interpretation of the genuineness of observable things" (Reisinger & Steiner, 2005). It is not important whether the object or the experience really is "authentic" or "not" (if such a distinction exists). Taylor (2001) points out that today authenticity is not found in the object but in "sincere interactions" where value is created and the way tourists will interpret authenticity is the result of negotiation, of "negotiated meanings". Other authors such as Cole (2007) argue that considering something authentic or not is related to notions of premodern-authentic and modern-inauthentic.

Similarly to perceived image, authenticity perception also entails a selection of elements and memories. "For village life to be authentic, it must accord with how one thinks village life is. For a ritual to be authentic, it must accord with how one thinks such a ritual would be conducted. Tourists have preconceived notions about the sites they are going to visit, or tour guides or previous tourists tell them what to expect" (Reisinger & Steiner, 2005).

From a more existentialist point of view the authenticity judgment of value is from the outside to the inside: the tourist judges some exterior elements or experiences to be authentic in relation to the self-identity. "Existential experience involves personal or intersubjective feelings activated by the liminal process of tourist activities" (Wang, 1999). Furthermore, Wang (1999) classifies this type of authenticity as "intra-personal and inter-personal". From this perspective the authenticity of the sight is not valuable but instead the authenticity of the experience is in relation with the intra-personal values of the tourist. Besides, if for example a family trip experience has served to strengthen family relationships, this will probably be considered as existentially authentic from an inter-personal point of view.

One important aspect that helps to explain such subjectivity of the concept of authenticity and this variability is that authenticity always implies a value judgment (of the experience, the place, the sight, etc.), in a similar way to perceived image. Probably, if a tourist judges something as "authentic", probably the resulting perceived image will also be judged as positive (and authentic). As Taylor (2001) explains "movements towards authenticity create positive value". It should be noted that value judgments are subjective and made according to specific social and individual value systems; what may be judged as authentic for

someone may not be for another, the same goes for the judgment of inputs resulting in images. "Of course, authenticity is valuable only where there is perceived inauthenticity", in modern societies people have a simultaneous feeling of sense of loss related to mass culture and industrialization and at the same time a feeling of redemption or escape from that through contact with the "naturally, spiritually, and culturally "unspoilt"" (Taylor, 2001).

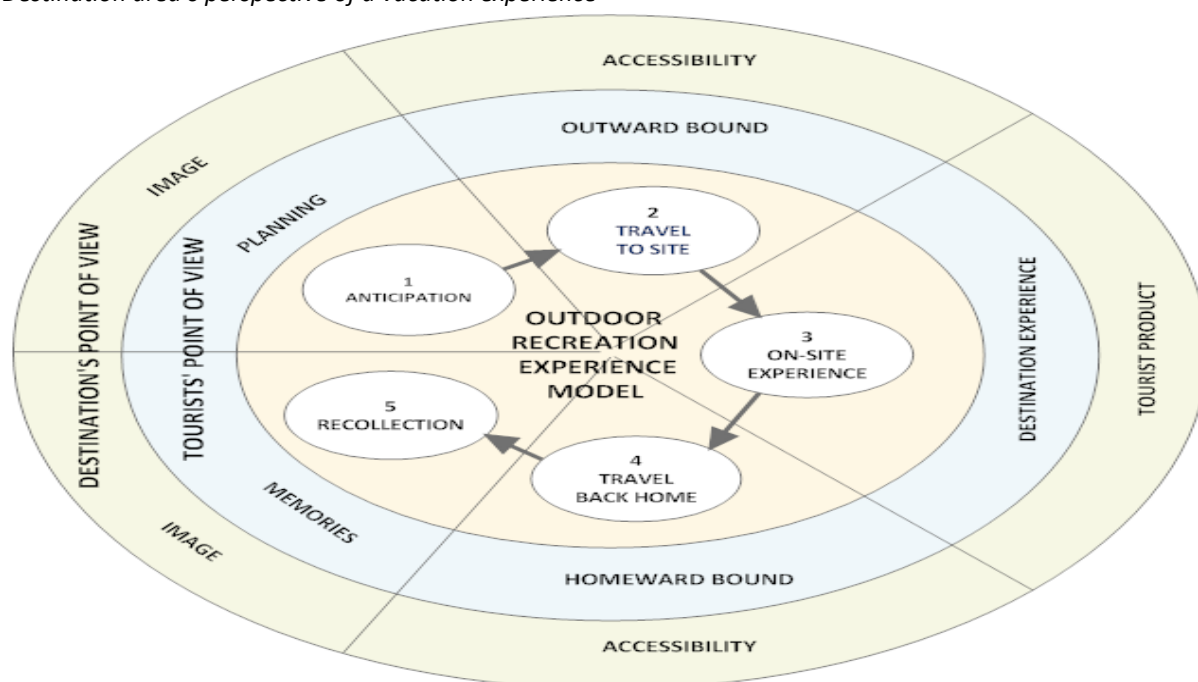
We argue that authenticity itself is mediated by images, and that images are also influenced by this concept of authenticity. From the very beginning in tourism the issue that arises is "the authenticity of the gazed-upon object" (Waller & Lea, 1998). "The image saturated character of "reality" dissolves the boundaries between a place centred view of authenticity and an aesthetic illusion, and raises questions about the continuing relevance of the traditional concept of authenticity" (Hugues, 1995). As Waller and Lea (1998) note from the work of Pearce and Moscardo (1986), "not only do people's perceptions of a situation play an important role in determining its judged authenticity, but people's needs or demands for authenticity also vary. Thus, enjoyment of a situation will be mediated by people's *preferences* for authenticity as well as their *perceptions* of it". "With respect to different cultures or peoples that are to be toured, authenticity is a label attached to the visited cultures in terms of stereotyped images and expectations held by the members of tourist-sending society" (Wang, 1999). As Hugues (1995) explains with regard to the current notion of authenticity "images do not "lie" in a post-modern construction", "the quality of an image is in the sensuality of its appeal more than its verisimilitude or probity". Perceived authenticity will influence how image is perceived and will set the standards of evaluation, tourist experience and satisfaction.

1.2.2.4. Temporal dimension of perceived image

Perceived images, or images in the minds of tourists, undergo different stages of evolution in relation to the temporal moment of the tourist experience. In this sense we can distinguish three types of image: pre-visit, *in situ* (or on-site), and post-visit image. Depending on the temporal stage of the tourist experience, whether it is before the experience, while having the experience or after the experience, perceived tourist images change and evolve. In fact, as we have previously explained, the previous experience of the tourist with a place or the tourist experience itself are determining factors for perceived tourist image formation. These three types of perceived images are mentioned by multiple authors among whom Clawson and Knetsch (1966), Galí and Donaire (2005) and Planas (2009).

This temporal dimension of tourist perceived images is based on the foundational work about the phases of outdoor recreation experience by Clawson and Knetsch (1966). These authors explain that the recreational-tourist experience has five fundamental phases: 1. Anticipation (pre-experience), 2. Travel to the site, 3. On-site (*in situ*) experiences and activities, 4. Return trip, 5. Recollection (post-experience) phase, as shown in Figure 1.4. "The whole outdoor recreation experience is a package deal; all part are necessary and the sum of satisfactions and dissatisfactions from the whole must be balanced against total cost" (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966).

Figure 1.4.
 Destination area's perspective of a vacation experience



Source: Clawson & Knetsch, 1966

In our study, this five-stage classification will be adapted to the formation of perceived tourist image and reduced to three fundamental phases: pre-visit image (phase 1), on-site or *in situ* image (which will include the travel experience itself: phases 2, 3, 4) and post-visit image (phase 5).

Dann explains that “generally pre-trip promotion is dominated by outsiders (tour operators) whereas on-trip and post-trip senders are respectively and overwhelmingly the destination authorities (majority people) and tourists themselves” (1996), however today with the online social media, abundant pre-trip information is available coming from tourists to other tourists.

- Pre-visit image

Pre-visit image is the image of a destination tourists have in mind prior to the actual trip. This type of image is also called perceived image *a priori* (Galí & Donaire, 2005; Planas, 2009). Perceived image *a priori* is “the mental construction an individual makes of a place without having a physical connection with the place” (Galí & Donaire, 2005).

This type of image is formed during the first phase of Clawson and Knetsch (1966), that of anticipation, which includes planning. This planning can go on for months in the case of planning a tourist vacation and may lead to a recreational experience if it leads to a positive decision (Clawson and Knetsch, 1966). Generally, even before planning, tourists have in their minds notions and ideas about multiple places, more or less formed images of destinations, sometimes without even having the intention to go there at all, as destination images and stereotypes usually spread throughout society through multiple channels. Then, when potential tourists are planning their trip, the formation of pre-visit tourist images becomes more vivid and intense. Because of the intangible and essentially experiential nature of the

tourism product, tourists usually check for abundant information before the trip and get in touch with multiple images of the destination. At this stage of searching for tourism information and trip planning, tourists become permeable to the multiple incoming images.

Such a process is not just about looking for information, but about dreaming about the destination before going to it. In this way, “tourists are travellers before the journey” having “already visited the place before they physically visit it” getting actually to “get to know again” the area once they get there (Galí & Donaire, 2005). People actually choose a destination at this stage not because of the reality of this destination but because of the collectively projected and socially constructed image they receive through multiple means (Anton, Fernández & González, 2008). As Clawson and Knetsch warn, travel agents should beware of how accurate the image they project is at this stage, as “pleasurable anticipation is almost a necessity” but “excessive optimism in the anticipatory stage may lead to later disappointment and frustration” (1966).

An outstanding study on pre-visit image is that of Govers et al. (2007a) who stress that studies on pre-visit image are scarce. The authors comment that “this is a void in existing research, which generally tends to measure image at the destination or post-visit” (Govers et al., 2007a). Moreover, due to the importance of this image to destination choice, such a pre-trip perception is widely the target of branding studies. As Murphy et al. (2007) explained, brands provide potential tourists with pre-trip information about a destination so that they can recognise and differentiate it from others, and form expectations about their likely holiday experience there.

- On-site image and transitional phases

Perceived image on-site or *in situ* is a crucial part of the image formation process, it is the image that is formed once we are actually having the tourist experience and usually when we are at the destination. However, we acknowledge that the tourist image resulting from the active experience starts with the trip to the destination and ends with the trip back home, two transitional phases that are also important in the image perception process.

Clawson and Knetsch (1966) explain this first transitional phase of recreational experience which is the trip to the destination. This phase will condition the time, distance and cost of the trip. It will also affect the tourists’ satisfaction and subsequent image formation and experience predisposition. Depending on the type of tourist, this phase will be more or less important, for visitors who aim at “sightseeing”, the trip may be positively perceived, however for others it may be a necessary nuisance (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). Perceived image formation starts to vary in this phase. It is during this phase that the tourist not only leaves behind his/her daily space but also the symbolic charge associated to it (social relationships, behaviour, tabus, territorial relationships, etc.) and prepares for a new space to which a different symbolic charge is ascribed depending on the constructed image this person has (Anton et al., 2008).

Then comes the image formed on-site at the destination while having the actual experience and performing the recreational activities. These activities may be outdoor recreational activities but may also include periods of, for example, inter-attraction or inter-activity mobility (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). “Experience is the central objective of the tourist process” (Anton et al., 2008). The perceived image *in situ* is a compound of motivations,

feelings, knowledge and information (Planas, 2009), that the destination provides us with and that we perceive and interiorize. It is while sightseeing that tourists get in touch with the destination and compare their previously formed image, “what they had imagined” (Galí & Donaire, 2005), with what they are actually seeing. As Anton et al. (2008) point out, “in many cases tourists don’t get to know a space but to recognize it”. Regarding this matter, some authors pose crucial questions: To what degree is tourist experience mediated by this image? To what degree do tourists see what they see or what they should see? (Galí & Donaire, 2005; Anton et al., 2008).

Tourists are at the tourist space for a limited timespan and this will influence their knowledge of and attitude to the place, this ephemeral nature of tourism makes the tourist willing to capture the destination through souvenirs, photographs, videos, postcards, etc. that reinforce the image the tourist has (Anton et al., 2008).

From early works such as Pearce’s (1982), it was stated that image and destination perception change after the visit. As Kim and Richardson (2003) note in the destination image literature “actual visitation to a place often causes people to change their images of it”. Mariné-Roig (2011b) suggests that the best opportunity destinations have to change their (preconceived) image and influence tourists’ perceived image formation is while tourists are on-site having their experience and sightseeing. “The act of sightseeing or the tourist experience is, for many authors, the most important part of the tourist experience” (Mariné-Roig, 2011b). “It is in the act of sightseeing that the representation of the true society is formulated and refined. It is merely the moment of greatest intensity in the operation of tourist attractions on the tourist consciousness”; “the act of sightseeing is a kind of involvement with social appearances that helps the person to construct totalities from his disparate experiences” (MacCannell, 1976).

Then comes the final transitional stage when the return trip closes such physical trip experience. As Clawson and Knetsch (1966) explain that the recreational nature of this trip back is very different from the outward one, especially memories are certainly different. The tourist is now taking with him/her multiple souvenirs, experiences and material objects (Anton et al., 2008). This is the start of post-trip image formation.

- Post-visit image

Perceived image post-experience is the image tourists have in mind once the experience is (partly or completely) over, probably once they get back home, once they have contrasted what they expected *a priori* to what they encountered *in situ*. This is also called the “*a posteriori*” image (Galí & Donaire, 2005; Anton et al., 2008). Clawson and Knetsch (1966) explain that after the trip is over comes the recollection phase where the person recalls to memory one or more aspects of the total experience and may share these recollections with friends, relatives and acquaintances -sometimes beyond the point of their maximum interest. Very importantly, “recollection of one outdoor experience often provides the starting point for anticipation of another by the same person or by others” (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966).

Indeed, tourism is not just about having an experience *in situ* but also about recalling this experience. “The tourist experience does not end when the journey home starts, but tourist

areas are consumed in the place of origin after the trip” (Galí & Donaire, 2005). This recalling the trip is often done through objects such as photographs (Galí & Donaire, 2005) and souvenirs (Mariné-Roig, 2011b). Authors such as Murphy et al. (2007) point out the role of branding at this stage of destination image perception, as they extract from the work of Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) “a destination brand can assist tourists in consolidating and reinforcing their perceptions of the destination after their travel experience”.

Moreover, post-visit image is closely related to the satisfaction the tourist has obtained with the experience, and how closely pre-visit image and image *in situ* were matched. “After a vacation, people form opinions on the/a tourism destination’s capacity to provide experiences that correspond with their needs and fit the image they had of the destination” (Krizman & Belullo, 2007). Indeed, post-visit image is perhaps the most interesting image as it is the most elaborated and processed one, it is the accumulation of multiple images mixed with experiences and feelings that results in an overall perceived image. A *posteriori* image is a construction that “is not a real image, it is an idealization of the trip that is shared” (Anton et al., 2008). And not only that, post-visit perceived image is usually more similar to what will be socially transmitted by tourists. Post-visit perceived image will elude some elements and preserve others, tourists will purposefully select some elements and memories over others. Although perceived image *a posteriori* might not be exactly the same that what will be transmitted, it is intimately attached to it, hence the interest of the study of post-visit image. However, authors such as Galí and Donaire (2005) note that it is just now that some studies are starting to place the emphasis on *a posteriori* perception.

The fact that *a posteriori* image has been less studied may be related to the difficulty to access tourists once at home, at their multiple locations of origin and ask them about their previous trips. Moreover, depending on how much time has gone by after the trip, the perception may be different. In spite of that, today, new virtual spaces, especially web 2.0 sites, enable researchers to overcome many of these difficulties by enabling them to get access to *a posteriori* images transmitted by tourists online, as we shall see later in section 1.3.6.

1.2.3. Projected and perceived image mutual influence and image reproduction

At this point, the phenomenon of the reproduction of tourist image through the mutual influence of projected and perceived images should be explained. We contend that there is a dual mutual influence between projected and perceived images which closes the tourist image construction circle and makes it spin dynamically.

The main idea of this section is that, as explained, agents actively project intentional images (for some purpose), through different means, that try to reach the demand side or the tourists. Then the demand side or the tourists actively interpret, interiorise and communicate such images, creating new perceptual images that at the same time influence the supply side or the projected images, which aim to fulfil tourists’ expectations. Moreover tourists have an ‘image reproduction function’ through their actions and behaviours. As Richards (2002) explains, tourists reproduce and extend the existing attraction system through their consumption and can transform it. These aspects can also be assimilated to tourist image. “Tourists are not only guided by attraction systems, but in seeking to escape from their confines, they are at the same time challenging, extending, and ultimately reinforcing the systems themselves” (Richards, 2002). The circle is then closed through the

actions and perceptions of tourists in what Albers and James (1988) first call “the closing of the hermeneutic circle” of tourist image. From this point of view, image must be seen as a **dialectic** construct.

The more the circle turns, the more it becomes vicious unless foreign inputs disrupt it. This viciousness of the circle may be responsible for the immobility of certain images, the persistence of myths and stereotypes. The more such myths and cultural identity elements are projected within images, the more they become influential to tourists, and the more these, in turn, want to fulfil their expectations by seeing these images, the more the agents will try to project these myths and cultural identity elements to meet tourists’ needs. In this way, it becomes an ongoing process of feedback and adaptation, as an ongoing vicious loop.

After all these considerations we arrive at the complete circle of tourist image construction that illustrates the whole process of image formation, from the image projected that influences the tourist image perception to the influence the tourist exerts on the new projected image and all the elements that play a role in this process.

Figure 1.1 shows destination image as a construct formed by the dialectic interaction of projected and perceived images. The projected image, embodied in specific representations, propelled and formed by different types of agents (local agents, intermediaries, independent sources, friends and relatives, previous own experience) according to different interests, is directed at the tourist, intending to influence the tourist’s image perception. The tourist in turn perceives the projected image according to his or her context and identity. What is more, the tourist feeds back on and influences the projected image in a kind of dialectic relationship, since projected image adapts to tourist expectations in order to satisfy them and to provide a good authenticity perception. Moreover, such a circle becomes a dialectic constructive spiral when placed within a temporal perspective, since the circle spins and evolves continuously with new inputs and outputs. This circle could be visualized as a four dimensional spiral were tourists’ projected and perceived images always interact and mutually influence each-other provoking change. When the circle loops or spins, it never gets back to the same point. It advances and changes in time, adding this fourth dimension to the circle, which becomes a spiral.

Within such a framework, tourist (image) identity is somewhat related to the object in the sense that the first defines the second, and not necessarily vice-versa (Mariné-Roig, 2009). Looking at the first half of the circle (agents to tourists), tourist image identity or representation is intentionally projected by the agents to reach the tourist and refer to the destination. Concerning this subject, interesting things to study are: determining the tourist identity of a destination, studying it within the context of agent power struggles, examining different images projected by the different agents, pin-pointing the image commonalities and differences, and exploring the possible reasons and intentionality of such an identity within the image, among others.

Some authors, such as Papson (1981) focus on one sense of the mutual influential relationships between projected and perceived images: “the relationship between tourist motivations and marketing policy must be viewed as interactive, each changing and adjusting. This process of reality construction can be seen in the specific marketing strategies”. In this respect, Urbain (1989) considers “the ideology of tourism advertising, and the tourist experience as an empiric translation of a narrative consciousness of travel” to be

fully complementary. In this way we can see the relationship of a projected identity by agents (advertising) linked with the tourist experience (perceived). Tourism advertising, as a memory and mirror of a narrative travel consciousness carries and reflects the marks of a tourist's basic experience.

Many authors such as Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) and Kim and Richardson (2003) coincide that perceived images influence both the decision-making behaviour and process of potential tourists and the degree of satisfaction with the tourist experience. As Papson (1981) explains, the tourist phenomenon is moved by the will of tourists to fulfil certain desires and needs (expectations). The satisfaction of such needs and desires will influence how the destination is perceived, the tourist satisfaction and future destination choice, therefore destinations (and their agents), with their representations, try to adapt to such needs and desires to satisfy visitors.

Papson (1981) contends that "these vacation destinations cater to a multiplicity of needs mixing history, excitement, and fantasy together as well as providing specific environments to meet needs of children, adolescents, and adults. Vacation satisfaction depends on matching needs to environments". For the author one function of marketing is to integrate consumers' needs and products which satisfy those needs, to integrate the tourist with the destination. As Papson (1981) explains, modern tourism marketing is visitor oriented and aims to provide what potential visitors want or desire. Murphy et al. (2007) based on the model of Ekinci (2003) for destination branding, argue that destination brands' personality (the brand identity) should try to match the personality (values and lifestyle) of the tourists (self-identity) to be more effective and influential. "Travel is increasingly about experiences, fulfilment, and rejuvenation rather than about places and things" (King, 2002 as cited in Murphy et al., 2007). In consequence, King (2002) (as cited in Murphy et al., 2007) states that travel and tourism promoters should focus more and try to match "what the customer would like to see in and of themselves and their lifestyles, rather than on the tangible properties of the product or service being promoted". "This means that destination marketing organizations need to place more emphasis on the creation and promotion of holiday experiences that link key brand values and assets to the holiday aspirations and needs of customers as set out in the Ekinci model" (Murphy et al., 2007).

For this purpose, projected image often becomes stereotyped or mystified, as seen previously. Actually, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) note from multiple works that "in essence, representations of destinations typically rely on essentialized descriptions that are appealing to, and easily understood by potential tourists".

Stabler (1988) assimilates the two sides of tourist image to market economic theory (supply and demand). As explained by Mackay and Fesenmaier (1977), Stabler (1988) separates image "into the demand (person) and supply (destination) sides of economic theory" in which image from the "supply side typically reflects the destination's resources and attributes" and an "assessment of how well these correspond to the demand side" must be sought. According to Stabler's (1988) conception, the demand "image" seems stable and immobile and the supply side seems an "innocent" part of image where different agents just try to adjust to the tourists' image. In some sense, Stabler (1998) is right when he says that actors projecting image try to adjust to the tourist's perception but, as Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997) criticize, the supply side or projecting agents are not innocent but have

an intentionality behind their acts and not only try to adapt to tourists' expectations and images, but also sometimes try to create tendencies according to their goals.

The process of image adaptation to the tourists' needs is not just a matter of fulfilling expectations and of tourist satisfaction, but of the economic and other interests attached to them. As Caton and Almeida (2008) explain, if tourism narratives and discourse of "the other" have been transmitted by the agents to the tourists conveying certain myths, the creditability of these agents depends on how well such myths are present in the tourist experience. Hence, the agents have the economic imperative to provide such myths to satisfy tourists (Caton & Almeida, 2008). In this way, tourist image formation becomes an ongoing process of mutual influence and adaptation of both the representations projected by the agents and the perceived images (and later re-transmitted images) by tourists who feedback to the circle that will determine not only the final overall image and tourist satisfaction, but also will affect the territory and its culture. As Caton and Almeida (2008) contend, "in order to deliver the goods, brokers [both international and nationals of the host country] often shape cultural objects and performances to meet expectations and desires of their customers".

Many authors explain the factors influencing the tourists' images and how the projected image influences, and to what degree, the perceived image, such as Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) and Govers et al. (2007a). However, few have studied the second part of the circle (tourists to agents) and the fact that the tourist, with his/her own expectations and preconceptions, and subsequent actions, influences projected images in a process of "closing the hermeneutic circle" (Albers & James, 1988; Jenkins, 2003; Caton & Almeida, 2008).

No studies have been found on how or by what mechanisms the tourists' (perceived) image makes the different agents adapt their projected image to meet their expectations, at least in these terms. Such a lack of research is comprehensible since perceived image is highly subjective and socially constructed. Therefore, finding a way to study how agents correspond to tourists' expectations seems highly difficult, but cannot be overlooked. Moreover, this influence has probably not been researched because it does not have a direct market utility like the influence of agents exerted on tourists has. This shows that sometimes within tourism research, and especially for tourist agents, research has focused on how image can be worked upon. We guess the general reasoning behind tourism research has been rather: how can we really influence image rather than what actually influences it (more)? The second half of the circle definitely needs exploring.

The **mechanisms through which perceived image influences the projected image** of tourist agents are several. Among them we can distinguish the direct and the indirect ones.

- The **direct** ones are the mechanisms that entail a purposive effort by the agents to undercover what the tourists think and perceive to be able to adapt or adopt consequent policies. In some cases such influence will take place in a face-to-face interaction. For example at a hotel reception, at a tourist office, at a travel agency, etc. where the tourist will express his or her ideas, perceptions and needs.

In many cases the tourists are directly and purposefully questioned by the agents. In some cases quality polling or questionnaires are mechanisms used to ascertain tourists' image perception. In this way tourist agents (from travel agencies, to MTOs, to hotels, etc.) adapt

to the perceived image of tourists. Quality questionnaires given to tourists in hotels would be a clear example of this on a small scale. On a larger scale, local tourism organizations or tourism observatories undertake demand studies and question tourists about different aspects of the destination and their satisfaction with the experience usually when they are on site. This is the case of the Catalan Tourism Observatory, or the Tourism Observatory of the Costa Daurada brand in Catalonia. Then, the results of these studies are published and issued to tourist agents for them to consider the results and do what they deem appropriate.

In general, these types of mechanisms would include market research on tourism tendencies, perceived image, evaluation of satisfaction, tourism needs and expectations.

- **Indirect** mechanisms of perceived image influencing projected image would be means by which social trends, tourism needs, etc. are transmitted without the direct, purposeful intervention of agents. In this case, the social mechanisms through which identity, image and values are transmitted work on their own through multiple elements, often just small details, which lead to mutual adaptation.

We consider that such mechanisms occur principally through the action of tourists themselves: their actions at the destination, the activities they perform, the information they later transmit to friends and relatives, etc. have an influence on the projected image by agents, and not only that, they also influence the physical space and the image this space will transmit.

However, the completion of the image circle is not just a question of image-projecting agents, but more importantly the fact that tourists have an active role in image creation, construction and transmission, and closing the circle. **The tourists themselves are agents of transformation and image reproduction through their actions.** This image reproduction function will not just influence the tourist agents but influence other tourists' perceptions too and contribute to the transformation of space and culture itself at the destination.

Caton and Almeida (2008) note the idea from Bruner (1991) and Urry (1990) that tourists seek items to gaze upon that conform to the representations of places and cultures they have internalized from home, and then record them (typically with their cameras), thus replicating and reinforcing extant perceptions. Thus, a hermeneutic circle of representation is in spin (Albers & James, 1988). This reflects widely how the tourist expectations and subsequent actions play a crucial role in the image formation cycle.

Tourists take an active part in the whole image construction process. As Urbain (1989) explains, the tourist is a dynamic and acting agent, involved and engaged in a *narrative process* "from which the successive positions, translations, and semantic value of his topological transformations can be decoded" (Urbain 1989). It is important to stress that the tourist is an active agent producing image, transmitting it, and transforming his or her social and physical environment.

However, when explaining the perceived image formation process, the most important part of the whole (the tourist) is often undermentioned or is depicted as a passive element of the whole. Extensive literature talks about the influence several information sources exert on tourists' perceptions. However, the role of tourists as agents actually influencing and feeding back to the projected image is underrepresented in tourism research. As Caton and Almeida (2008) stress, while considerable attention has been devoted to the first half of the circle or

representation of destinations and hosts in the tourism media, especially focusing on depictions of countries and people from a Western dominant position, less mention has been given to the ways tourists replicate and reinforce media depictions, how they send feedback. Caton and Almeida (2008) mention the exception of the work of Jenkins (2003) in this respect “who demonstrates empirically that tourists do, in fact, complete the hermeneutic circle by producing photographs that look very similar to those found in the brochures that target them”.

In a similar vein, Caton and Almeida’s (2008) study proves that the tourists recreate the images and stereotypes of the other side of the circle thus closing the hermeneutic circle of image. Their study analyses pictures taken by students in a cross-cultural study programme abroad, who had a certain degree of critical thinking, and supposedly would not reproduce stereotypes and dominant discourses so strongly. What they found is that stereotypes and the domination of certain discourses were exactly reproduced by these students. For the authors “tourists seek items to gaze upon that conform to the representations of places and cultures they have internalized from home, and then record them (typically with their cameras), thus replicating and reinforcing extant perceptions”. Thus, a hermeneutic circle of representation is in spin. The authors hypothesize that tourists’ photographs should be “inscribed with features of the Western imaginary” if it is confirmed that “tourist encounters are shaped by dominant discourses about the other”. In other words, if tourists act as discourse and stereotype image producers and reproducers, their photographs should reflect such influence as a general tendency. The authors conclude that indeed, tourists do close the hermeneutic circle with their actions and reinforce the dominant patterns and discourse and reflect the tendencies of essentialization and exoticization. They reproduce the binaries of traditional/modern, subject/object, master/servant, centre/periphery and devious-lazy/moral-industrious (Caton & Almeida, 2008). Thus, the images and captions referring to the Other produced by tourists seem to echo tourism media representations quite closely, despite the fact that the goal of the trip participants was to provide a critical context for international exposure and facilitate cross-cultural understanding that reduced stereotypes and stressed values of people’s equality and interdependence.

Such image reproduction and reinforcement, through tourists’ actions and behaviours at the destination has different effects and consequences on the destination itself and its culture. As explained in Taylor’s (2001) paper, tourist experiences and toured objects are authenticated by the tourists through simulation and mimesis. “As such, “ethnic” sightseeing becomes an act of re-creation”; “The voyeuristic impression on the postcard prescribes, reinscribes and modulates what is seen first-hand. Indeed, the known-ness of the cultural Other is important; tourists can be sure to get what they expect” (Taylor, 2001). Hence, the practices-uses of leisure, behaviours and identifications of place lead to the very transformation of the same in terms of cultural identity. In this sense we see that tourists, through their leisure and space uses and social representations, influence and transform space itself and cultural identity notions associated to it, and these, in turn, influence the tourists’ perceptions. As McCabe and Stokoe (2004) put it, the construction of places is an “ongoing achievement of interaction”. Papson (1981) explains that “the images found in the lurebook establish the boundaries of experience by providing definitions of what is beautiful, what is scenic, what one should experience. These images are reinforced by posters, panels of scenics found in tourist centers, photographs found on maps, post cards, etc. Experience

is shaped by preconceptions learned from advertising. Advertising demonstrates the breath-taking scene. The role of the tourist is to find it and take a photograph of it”.

Furthermore, some authors such as Desforges (2000) contend that through the formation of particular identities (of tourists), tourism consumption and practices can be explained. This relates the formation of certain identities, embodied in mental images, which are later transferred to “reality” through tourism practices. Through tourism, the tourist not only sustains a self-narrative of personhood, but also engages in experiences and practices that produce “historically and geographically situated senses of self-identity” (Desforges, 2000).

Indeed, reading through the work of Urbain (1989) and Desforges (2000), the idea that tourist images have an effect on real social, temporal and spatial physical environments through their actions was reinforced. The tourist, through his or her usages of space and practices, according to his or her self/social-identity and expectations, transforms it according to a series of signs, meanings and images in mind, but not only that, he/she transforms it in order for it to match these signs, meanings and images. “At the origin of every space, there is a subject-user, a manipulating subject, who *turns space into signs* according to a certain view of the world” (Greimas & Court, 1979 as cited in Urbain, 1989). The tourist’s “pattern of perception and exploitation is consolidated through practice (its recurring usages) with automatisms of travel” (Urbain, 1989).

As McCabe and Stokoe (2004) demonstrate in their study, “places are characterized by the people who occupy them, and people can be categorized by the places they choose to occupy. Within member’s accounts, moral senses of place emerge”. “Such categorizations are not just simple, objective or factual descriptions: they construct places as “the geographical world we know”” (McCabe & Stokoe 2004). Hence, we can see that the creation of tourist self and social identity, as well as the creation of a represented place identity by tourists, are attached to the evolution of place itself (in terms of its characteristics, spatial uses, cultural identity, etc.) in a two-way mutual influence. These people, occupying places and categorizing them, have certain images in mind and certain subjective perceptions of place which influence their social behaviour and the way they will identify the place.

In this regard, it is very interesting for tourism studies to have access to the tourists’ descriptions and to their “talk” about places, to be able to know how they construct and perceive them subjectively, and how indirectly the space or place itself may be influenced. McCabe and Stokoe (2004) explore an “analytic approach that allows examination of action-description detail and place-identity links in talk”. However, difficulties of time and access to the people in question (the tourists) may be encountered from this approach, assuming that tourists might come from distant places. Instead, the Internet, and new 2.0 website spaces have opened new ways of accessing such information provided by the same tourists in a probably unreserved and non-costly manner in such UGC spaces as travel blogs. Tourists now have spaces of what we could call “talk” where they explain their tourist experiences, thoughts, etc. in relation to certain places (see sections 1.3.4.1. and 1.3.6).

Moreover, the descriptions provided by tourists transmit certain notions of cultural identity. However, as McCabe and Stokoe (2004) stress, few empirical translations “examine how the embeddedness of place and identity is constructed in tourists’ talk”, an aspect that should

be further researched. The authors talk about a body of works that explore the function of spatial language and “place formulations” (Shcegloff 1972) in the construction of located identities. They also mention discursive psychologists’ works that “have focused on the way belonging and/or not belonging to places is accomplished in talk; how descriptions of place are action-oriented, and how people’s talk about it becomes talk about category membership, for themselves and others”. McCabe and Stokoe (2004) found that the description of place and of the performed activities accomplished a place-identity function in three ways: “One, they invoked biographical detail to construct themselves as legitimate consumers of the park. Two, their recurrent use of temporal formulations connected practical methods for achieving particular kinds of tourist identities and places. Three, they described the activities of others as breaches of the spatial and, by implication, moral order” (McCabe & Stokoe, 2004). These theories stress the importance of the study of tourists’ stories and descriptions of destinations and experiences for the space transformation and understanding itself.

Today, the capacity tourists have to transmit and reproduce image, to tell their experiences and stories to others, thus closing the hermeneutic circle, has been extraordinarily increased by Internet communication capabilities, especially web 2.0 and user-to-user communication. The role of tourists as active creators, replicators and communicators of image is reinforced in the Internet era, and the figure of the tourist becomes central in understanding tourist image formation. Today, exploring how tourists replicate and transmit image online becomes fundamental for destinations because of the impact and consequences it may have on their society and space. Now, through online story-telling, tourists are able to transmit their images to other tourists at unprecedented rates in social virtual spaces such as travel blogs, highly descriptive in nature. As we shall see, transmitted online image by tourists today through web 2.0 is probably the most vivid and visual representative of the closing of the hermeneutic circle of image (see sections 1.3.4.1. and 1.3.6).

1.3. Tourist image online

Until now we have explained how tourist image is formed and we have especially paid attention to the nature of tourist image, a complex construct formed by the interaction of both the projected and the perceived images of a tourist destination with its multiple elements and aspects. The two main poles of tourist image, projected and perceived image, are not isolated items but on the contrary are strongly related and influence one another as we have seen in the previous section. It is important to reveal how these two elements relate, influence and adjust to one another, especially for the transcendence the subject has with online image communication and web 2.0.

The previous section dealt with the mutual influence of projected and perceived images and the way tourist image is reproduced and the circle of image formation closed. This served as an introduction to understanding the new processes occurring online and the new role of the tourist in image creation and formation online, as set out in the last paragraph. We emphasized the role of the tourist as an active agent of the image formation process, as an agent reproducing and transmitting image, as an agent of transformation through his/her actions, behaviours and story-telling, which aspects are the basis for the theoretical

development concerning online image communication. The figure of the tourist as an active tourist image creator and transmitter becomes more vivid than ever in the context in which online image communication becomes dominant and web 2.0 capabilities enable tourists to communicate at unprecedented scales.

In this context, the new particularities of online agents, including the tourist, will be explained and an adaptation of Gartner's (1993) classification of image information sources/agents considering an online context will be provided. The issue of image dissonance and congruency between different destination image sources will be presented. Web 2.0, which entails a revolution in the ways people communicate will also be explained, as well as the new power struggles in image projection with web 2.0 in play and the issue of image dissemination. Then, web 2.0 devices will be explained, especially focusing on travel blogs and travel reviews. After that, as a counterpoint, official tourism websites will be deployed.

Finally, the process by which perceived image becomes projected through user-generated content online, thus closing the hermeneutic destination image construction circle, will be explained.

1.3.1. The context of online image communication

In recent years "the Internet has become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information" (Lin & Huang, 2006). Tourism, is no exception as the Internet has become a major source of information for travellers, a platform for tourism business transactions (Pan et al., 2007) and a continuously growing communication tool for travel and tourism (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Indeed, travel and tourism are one of the most popular subjects on the Internet. There are increasing amounts of online travel-related information and tourists have an enormous number of choices as to where they travel and what they do (Travel Industry Association, 2005). As Dann foresaw already in 1996 "...clearly the language of tourism will increasingly become a language of cyberspace" (Dann, 1996).

Every day, more people are using the Internet for its multiple advantages. It provides deeper and broader information if compared to traditional information sources or agents. According to the Internet World Stats in June 2012, 34.3% of the world's population used the Internet, and the percentage approximately doubles in the case of Europe and North America (www.internetworldstats.com). This percentage has doubled since 2007 (see Krizman & Belullo, 2007). In the case of tourism, nowadays more and more, people rely on the Internet to check for tourist information and to plan their trip and to book multiple services (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto & Buultjens, 2008a). "With experiential products like tourism, the consumption is an end in itself and the planning of a trip is an ongoing enjoyable and interactive social process, where fantasy and emotions play an important role and consumers are involved in ongoing information search" (Decrop & Snelders, 2004 as cited in Govers et al., 2007a). Both processes of interaction and trip planning are especially incentivized by the structure and possibilities of web 2.0, hence the enormous popularity of tourism-related subjects in social networks and web 2.0 such as blogs. "The use of online sources of information to assist in the travel planning process is now well entrenched with prospective travellers" (Cox et al., 2008a). Over 200 million travel related searches are carried out each month on the Internet (Bray, 2007 as cited in Cox et al., 2008a). However, Cox, Burgess, Sellitto and Buultjens (2008b) observe that there has been limited research on

the information search process and decision-making behaviour related to online vacation planning.

Such popularity of the subject of tourism online and the suitability of tourist image transmission through the Internet come to a great extent from the nature of the tourism product itself. The intangibility of the tourism product and the high involvement of the tourist in the decision-making process (Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Cox et al., 2008b) make the tourist field very prone to online media communication. As explained by Krizman and Belullo (2007), the Internet has been and is increasingly used as a medium for tourism promotion and marketing because of the information-based nature of the tourist product and the global reach, multimedia capability, ease of use, interactivity and flexibility of the online websites. The Internet also has the particularity that through bidirectional communication it is the “only medium that can be used for commercial transactions without the help of other tools, since necessary activities such as showing the product, placing orders, making payment [...], software or transport titles, distributing the product can happen through the web” (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

Furthermore, the various agents participating in image creation and projection through several information sources and their way of interacting change with online communication. New agents and new ways of interacting appear and the correlation of forces among them is modified with the arrival of the Internet, and especially of web 2.0. In addition to the latter, with the Internet, it seems that tourist image communication and the means agents use for image transmission have improved. “The internet has opened up and improved communications, distribution channels and transactions in ways which could not have been imagined even at the beginning of the 2000s” (Akehurst, 2008).

Moreover, and probably more importantly, not just communication has improved but the influence the Internet may exert on (potential) tourists has also increased, or at least has the potential to do so. As some authors note, “the Internet offers great potential to influence consumers’ perceived images, including creating virtual experiences of destinations” (Gretzel, Yuan, & Fesenmaier, 2000 as cited in Krizman & Belullo, 2007).

However, in spite of all the changes that the Internet has brought about in tourist image communication, we must clarify that in our opinion, the Internet has not changed the nature or the essence of tourist projected images. We believe the Internet is a means, a channel of communication, a mediating information source which today stands out from the others and has specific characteristics. What we think the Internet has really changed is the way image is communicated, and how communications that were not possible are made real. What is really changing is perhaps not so much “what” but “how” and even “why” image is transmitted.

Images transmitted online continue to convey certain identity elements both referring to attribute-based elements which identify the destination and cultural identity elements. They convey stereotypes and are part of power struggles for different reasons. Likewise, the messages they convey belong to major discourses and ideologies. As Pritchard and Morgan (2005) contend, websites available to tourists shape their expectations long before they actually get to the destination, and hence representations of local life and identity become the codified and authorized versions of local culture and history.

As we explained about projected image, perceived image formation works similarly with both online and offline environments. The four components of perceived tourist image (cognitive, affective, conative and spatial) remain the same. The factors influencing perceived image formation are valid but need to be expanded to allow the consideration of the influence exerted by UGC and e-WOM found in web 2.0, which have become very powerful sources influencing perceived tourist image formation.

Moreover, other things have changed in the context of perceived image research. In this research we contend that the Internet, especially with the appearance of social networks and web 2.0, has become not just a medium to seek or disseminate tourist information but also a medium for self-expression. In the case of tourist image, it has not just become a channel to project and transmit certain images, but also a medium for tourists to express and transmit their perceived images and their opinions over multiple subjects, in an unprecedented way and with an unprecedented echo.

Accordingly, an increasing number of studies are looking for tourists' images, and the very same language of tourism in the World Wide Web. Concerning the fact that tourist image has been much less studied than projected image due to its relative inaccessibility, with the Internet era and the expansion of user-generated content spaces such as travel blogs, new 2.0 platforms appear that enable the study of tourist image, and especially of perceived image. These spaces with no entry barriers to information access open a new range of new perspectives and possibilities that need exploring.

1.3.2. Agents projecting image online

The context of the generalization of the use of the Internet (see 1.3.1), by both image-projecting agents and tourists, makes it fundamental to rethink the role agents, and their information sources, have in image formation online. Indeed, the concept of image formation agents and their information sources, is drastically changing with the irruption of the Internet. As Krizman and Belullo (2007) note, today, "destination images are derived from a wide spectrum of information sources, including Internet". Hence, image formation agents need to be redefined and recategorized in a way that incorporates the Internet into the continuum of image formation processes (Govers & Go, 2003).

In this context, Choi et al. (2007) explain that image formation has become a much more complex process than ever before and that researchers and practitioners are paying greater attention to the web, advocating a systematic re-categorization of image formation agents by taking into account a wide assortment of online information sources. Indeed the interest in the new image formation sources online is growing every day both by researchers and the different agents. This is to a great extent due to the "increased number and variety of online information about the tourism destinations introduced new challenges to achieving effective destination marketing" (Krizman & Belullo, 2007) and also because the online image has strong implications for destinations and their inhabitants. Online image transmission has changed the way image is transmitted and the influence it may exert, as well as its socio-cultural implications: now communication is instant and can reach distant places instantly and its consequences become highly unpredictable. In this sense, time and place related to tourist image become diluted and the strategies used to distribute and project image effectively ought to be changed. Hence, although the role of Internet as an agent in tourism

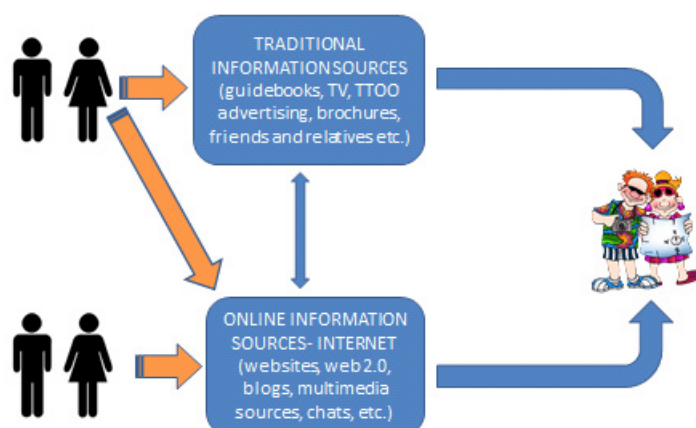
destination image formation should be emphasized and studied, research on the Internet as an image formation agent is still in its infancy (Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Choi et al. 2007) and this is a research gap to which this study intends to contribute.

The Internet can be seen as a secondary source of information influencing perceived image formation, acknowledging that a multiplicity of secondary sources project image through it. As a conveyor of secondary sources of information and due to the increasing use of the Internet, the Internet-transmitted image has a great potential to influence the perceived image formation of the destination. Some also see the Internet as a primary source for image formation as it “offers great potential to influence consumers’ perceived images, including creating virtual experiences of destinations” (Krizman & Belullo, 2007). In this respect, today the Internet is becoming the major channel of image dissemination and user influence. All the aspects concerning secondary information sources also occur with online image, and some influence effects may be incremented because of the growing reliability of online information. Moreover, the Internet also has elements of a primary source of information.

Before continuing with the deployment of the agents involved in online tourist image projection, we must address an unclear aspect on the definition of the Internet as an information source we have detected in the literature. It seems that some authors, such as Krizman and Belullo (2007), when dealing with the Internet and image information sources, seem to consider it to be an information source itself along with other offline sources. Although we do agree with the fact that the Internet might be seen as an information source, in the sense that tourists obtain information from the Internet, we think that information sources are inseparable from the agents producing them (the image formation agents); and in the case of the Internet there is not just one type of agent behind the information transmitted through it. We do not consider the Internet to be a “united” and “separate” information source in itself that must be analysed on its own as a destination image formation agent. For us, the Internet should be seen as an outstanding channel of communication (or the channel of information *par excellence* nowadays) used by several agents to transmit information. Therefore, the Internet can be said to be an exponentially growing information source for tourists, but always acknowledging that in reality it is a new platform or channel through which several information sources, produced by multiple agents, express. Online sources of information are multiple: travel agencies, hotels, local tourism organizations, guidebook companies, the tourists themselves, etc., therefore the Internet cannot be treated as a single information source or agent. It is worth mentioning that many of the online agents transmitting information already existed before the existence of the Internet, but some did not.

To explain the role agents play in online image projection, we ought to recall that the sequence by which a certain tourist image is transmitted is that an agent sends stimuli (representations with identity elements) through a certain information source or object and this reaches the tourist. Today, with the appearance of the Internet the information sources and the agents behind them multiply.

Figure 1.5.
Paths of destination image communication



Source: Author

In the present context, where online image communication seems to be expanding and becoming dominant, a **first main distinction** must be made when speaking about image formation agents or information sources. As Figure 1.5 shows, we distinguish between a) agents who project image through traditional information sources and b) agents who do so through online information sources. Three different paths of image communication occur: 1. (Traditional) Agents who only project image offline, 2. (Traditional) Agents who project image both offline and online, 3. (New) agents who project image exclusively online. (By traditional we mean that these were agents present in Gartner's (1993) classification, and existed before Internet communication).

1. Image-projecting agents offline: some agents may only send image through traditional offline information sources. This was the case for all tourism agents until the arrival of the Internet. For example, a journalist might only comment on destinations through newspaper articles. However, the tendency nowadays is that agents that usually projected image through traditional channels now also do so through online platforms. Agents who are not online today are decreasing and some may say they are in decline.

2. Image-projecting agents offline and online: probably the most common case with "Traditional" agents is that they maintain their traditional offline channels of image transmission but now also jump into the Internet world: for example, tourist guidebooks have their own websites and are available online, travel agencies, despite having their offline offices, also sell through the Internet and provide online information; local tourist organizations, apart from having their tourist offices (with brochures and various information), also have their own website for visitors and virtual offices; even friends and relatives might make comments to the potential tourist about their trips through e-mail or social networks.

This widespread adoption of the Internet by all types of traditional agents mentioned by Gartner (1993) is partly due to the several advantages it presents for image communication. For example, tourist agents have done well to notice the great potential of the Internet to influence tourists' perceptions. "For tourism organisations, both private and public, the internet has become one of the most important marketing communication channels" (Wang

& Fesenmaier, 2006 as cited in Akehurst, 2008). Several agents projecting image actively use it ("hotels, airlines, travel agencies, convention and visitor bureaus and other destination marketing organizations" (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006 as cited in Krizman & Belullo, 2007). In addition, "the timing, costs and strategies for distributing promotional messages have changed due to the increased importance of digital information" (Choi et al., 2007). Time for communication speeds up, as communication becomes instant and, as Krizman and Belullo (2007) note, the Internet is also used by agents because it is "relatively inexpensive" if compared to other promotion media or distribution channels.

Moreover, many agents are now online because the future seems to be online and they do not want to lose control over their clients and visitors. In this sense, it should be noted that today, many traditional agents that also operate online such as official websites, travel agencies, guidebooks, are embracing web 2.0, not to be left behind in all this user-generated and interactive communicative boom and to keep up with their influence over users.

3. Agents who only transmit online: probably more interestingly, with the Internet a range of new agents have appeared that did not exist before. These agents only transmit information and project tourist image online. These types of agents remain to be thoroughly studied. Some of these exclusively online agents may be similar to traditional ones: some travel agencies may only sell online and therefore project tourist image only online. Other exclusively online agents do not resemble the traditional media. These "brand new" agents are especially represented by the so-called web 2.0, user-generated content (UGC) and peer-to-peer communication. Indeed, the recent major developments of the Internet "have been in the area of user generated content (UGC) and peer-to-peer applications collectively known as Web 2.0" (O'Reilly, 2005). "One of the more recent sources of online information for consumers is user-generated content (UGC), where travellers are able to examine text, images, and videos that have been posted online by fellow consumers" (Burgess, Sellitto, Cox & Buultjens, 2009). Actually, we can talk of an explosion of UGC and self-generated content in the Internet favoured by the lowering entry barriers and the increasing number of "digital natives" (young population familiar with new technologies) (Anderson, 2008). Indeed, probably the most interesting image-projecting agents exclusively online are the users themselves posting their contents. This type of agents and their information sources are radically different from the traditional ones as they are Internet users or tourists projecting image through blogs, chats, social media, 2.0 platforms, etc.; average people willing to share information and experiences, not moved by economic or political interests.

1.3.2.1. Adaptation of Gartner's classification considering online agents

After having made an initial distinction between offline, online and mixed agents (both online and offline) we intend to adapt and expand Gartner's (1993) classification by including the Internet. This new classification should be expanded by adding the possible online side of the different agents already existing and by adding the new, exclusively online agents.

As we can see from this classification shown in Table 1.1 all eight types of image formation agents or information sources have their corresponding similar online counterparts online.

Table 1.1.

Adaptation of Gartner's (1993) classification considering online agents

OFFLINE AGENTS AND INFORMATION SOURCES	ONLINE AGENTS and INFORMATION SOURCES
1. Overt Induced I: Traditional forms of advertising (e.g., brochures, TV, radio, print, billboards, etc.). Destination marketing organizations with a specific interest in attracting tourists to their destinations.	1. Overt Induced I: Online forms of advertising: official or informational tourist websites, online brochures, online TV and radio, banners or website publicity. Online product recommenders. Destination marketing organizations with a specific interest in attracting tourists to their destinations.
2. Overt Induced II: Information received from tour operators, wholesalers, travel agencies and guidebook companies. They are interested in influencing the tourist's decision making, but are not attached to any specific destination. Images will be projected in order to attract and please their potential customers, probably embodying stereotypes, no matter what the local people of the destination might think of them.	2. Overt Induced II: Online information received from tour operators, wholesalers, travel agencies and tourist guidebooks. - Traditional tour operators and travel agencies with their websites and online sales. - Traditional guidebook companies with their websites and digital guidebooks. - Exclusively online travel agencies and tour operators - Trip-flight searchers, flight companies (e.g. www.edreams.com)
3. Covert Induced I: Second party endorsement of products via traditional forms of advertising. These agents may be famous people or well-known by the audience that will be given the task to project image and promote a destination. Their message will probably be better recorded by the audience, be more credible and create a better predisposition to the destination's brand and image.	3. Covert Induced I: Second party endorsement of products via online forms of advertising. These agents may be famous people or well-known by the audience that will be given the task to project image and promote a destination. - This can be done through personal blog sites and social media, comments, posting an advert video on Youtube, writing an article in an online journal, etc. (e.g. case of the fam-trips with bloggers in the Costa Brava)
4. Covert Induced II: Second party endorsement through apparently unbiased reports (e.g., newspaper, travel section articles). Many of these images are created through familiarization trips by professionals (reporters, writers, etc.). These agents have apparently no self-interest in promoting a destination and are therefore credible. However, the destination has no control over the projected images.	4. Covert Induced II: Second party endorsement through apparently unbiased online reports (e.g., news website, travel-related online articles). - This can be also done with familiarization trips by professionals (reporters, writers, etc.) and of social network people of reference, for example twitterers or bloggers of reference. This has been done for destinations such as the Costa Brava in Catalonia.
5. Autonomous News and popular culture: Documentaries, reports, news stories, movies, television programmes. They create an image of a destination without being really aware of it, through news or popular culture. Destinations have no control over these images and drastic events (such as a terrorist attack) may change the image of the place completely in a very short period of time. These agents are very credible and the only ones capable of changing images drastically very rapidly.	5. Autonomous News and popular culture: Online documentaries, reports, news stories, movies and especially multimedia files such as YouTube videos. Also social networks acting as news channels (Twitter, Facebook). (For example the videos uploaded on YouTube on Egypt's revolt strongly influenced the tourist image of the place).
6. Unsolicited Organic: unsolicited information received from friends and relatives. These friends and relatives have very credible information as they have visited the destination personally and act in the so-called "word-of-mouth" mode.	6. Unsolicited Organic: User-Generated Content (UGC): Web 2.0, social networks, blogs, travel blogs. Online information received from people you know (friends and relatives) without asking for it.
	6. Unsolicited Organic (NEW): User-Generated Content (UGC) Web 2.0, social networks, blogs, travel blogs, travel related forums. Information received from people you do not know without asking for it.

7. Solicited Organic: Solicited information received from friends and relatives. These agents are highly influential as the potential tourist is already interested in the destination as he or she asks for information and advice from trustworthy people of their environment.	7. Solicited Organic: User-Generated Content (UGC) Web 2.0, social networks, blogs, travel blogs. Information received from people you know (friends and relatives) asking for it.
	7. Solicited Organic (NEW): User-Generated Content (UGC) Web 2.0, social networks, blogs, travel blogs, travel related forums. Information received from people you do not know asking for it.
8. Organic: Actual visitation	8. Augmented reality (NEW): virtual tourism and experiences. e.g. SecondLife.

Source: Author

In the case of **overt Induced I information sources online**, the ones less credible and thus potentially less influential sources according to Gartner's (1993) classification, here we mainly find agents and information sources that already existed before the Internet. This is the case of online TV and radio publicity, online brochures, banners and publicity on websites and notably the official and informational tourism websites, which are the ones usually managed by the destination itself and that, as seen above (section 1.2.1.1), may reflect an image closer to the one that the local population will. Online product recommenders may also be considered similar to official tourism websites if they are managed by the destination. It should also be acknowledged that destination promoters have also jumped into the 2.0 website and social media and also promote themselves through this media. These agents may face some loss of control with the multiplicity of online sources, but can also have a great opportunity to position themselves in search engines and gain visibility.

In the case of **Overt Induced II** information sources, we also find some agents that already existed before: this is the case of traditional tour operators and travel agencies who, apart from their "real" offices, have their online websites that are usually not only informational but also enable buying products and package trips. Similarly, traditional guidebook companies have their websites and guidebooks available online in digital format. Then, in this case we also find similar tour operators and travel agencies that exclusively or mainly operate online (e.g. www.expedia.com). Such agents are completely new as they have been born online, although they perform similar functions to offline travel agencies. Moreover, some completely new intermediary agents who perform similar functions to travel agencies have appeared. These are, for example, trip or especially flight searchers, that merge in a single website offers from multiple flying companies and usually compete in price and in comparison capacity (e.g. www.edreams.com).

In the case of **Covert Induced I** agents, we can see that the agents online are similar to those offline. They may be the same agents that are given the task to promote the destination, the essentially different thing is the information source through which they project it. These famous people will now mainly use the new tools provided by the social networks and web 2.0. They may post the promotion on their blog sites, they may create a video and post it on Youtube, they may tweet a link, etc. Some of the agents, for example famous people, may be famous only in the net; this that makes them better suited to influence their virtual followers, fans, acquaintances, etc. This may be the case of famous twitterers and bloggers, with thousands of followers.

In the case of **Covert Induced II online**, the online agents who are given the task to project image may be similar to the agents offline. They may use the online version of press by writing travel related articles online, by posting articles on news or journal websites, etc. and they may also go on FAM trips with media professionals who will post the information online, notably using web 2.0, or with new social network-influent people, a type of agents that did not exist before, who may have great influence and credibility.

Regarding online **Autonomous news and popular culture**, these are images projected by agents online through documentaries, reports, news stories, movies and multimedia files, which are not controlled at all by the destination. Similarly to other types of agents, again what is new is the way such news and popular culture is transmitted. It is transmitted through multimedia platforms such as Youtube, social networks acting as news channels (Twitter and Facebook), and especially web 2.0. This type of communication is especially influential. As an example, videos posted on Youtube about the Arab Spring greatly influenced the image people had of these countries. Autonomous agents may now be even more influential as communication is instant, and potentially reaches a lot more people.

Concerning **unsolicited and solicited organic sources**, which in offline contexts refer to friends and relatives, we see that in online communication or e-word-of-mouth two different cases arise. "Research indicates that, due to the lack of commercial self-interest associated with WOM recommendations consumers tend to trust and be more influenced by this type of information than by more commercial sources such as travel agents or accommodation operators" (Burgess et al., 2009). However, Burgess et al. (2009), suggest more research should be done to uncover whether such influence occurs in the same way online. The two different cases are:

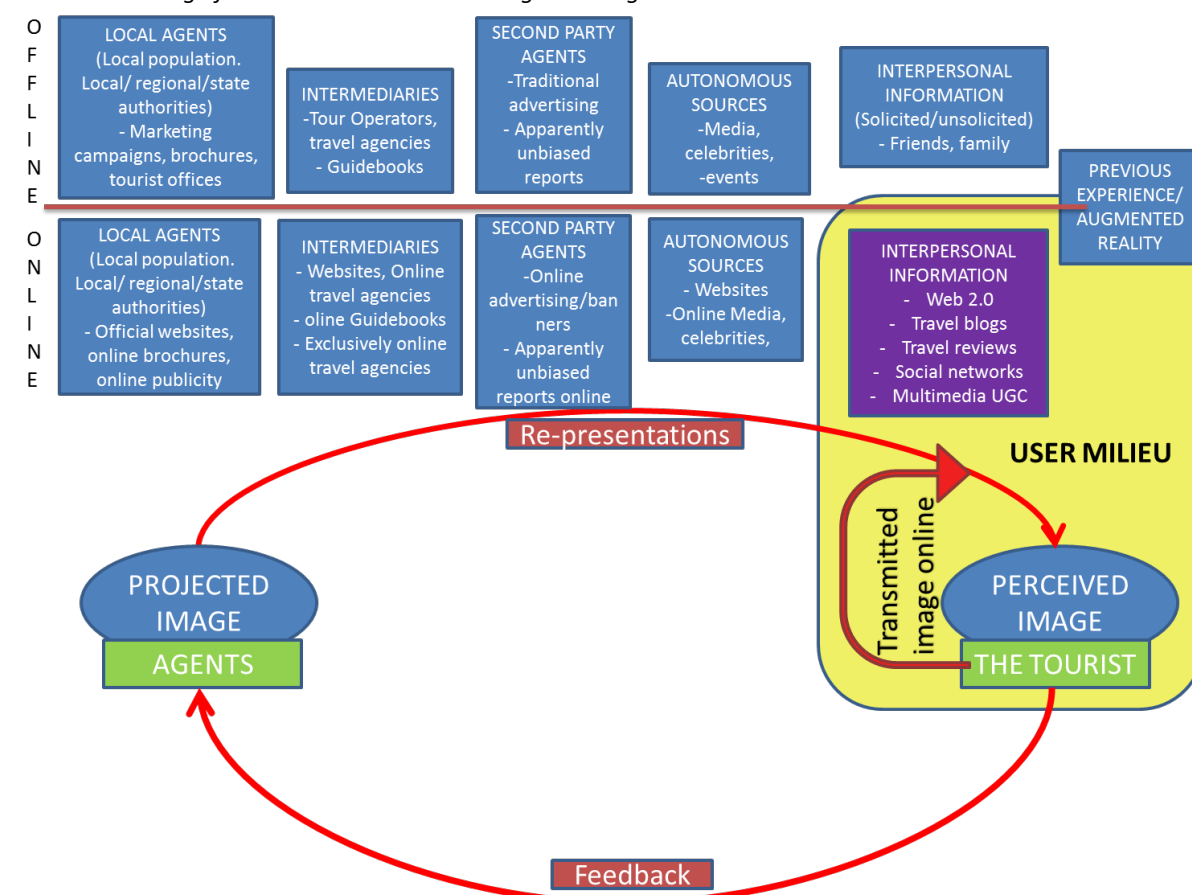
- The first case refers to **friends' and relatives' image projection online**: the agents (friends and relatives) are similar to those offline who project image through word-of-mouth, but again their medium of communication and the way they do it is different. We are talking about the UGC online, the web 2.0 and the social networks. Therefore their way of transmitting word-of-mouth is by transmitting the so-called e-word-of-mouth or e-WOM. Such image can be posted in multimedia forms in blogs, travel blogs, network social sites (facebook, twitter), online photograph sites (picassa, Flickr, etc.) which frankly opens up a whole range of new communicative possibilities with friends and relatives.

- But moreover, the second, and perhaps more interesting case, refers to some type of agents that did not play a role as information sources before, **unknown Internet users or peers to the tourist**. These agents transmit image similarly to the online friends' and relatives' image communication, through word-of-mouth too, as they are peers to the tourist, other average users posting information, but for the first time web 2.0 and the social media enable interaction and image transmission among people who do not know each other and who may be thousands of kilometres apart in different temporal, spatial and socio-cultural contexts. These agents, although the tourist does not know them, are highly credible and influential because of their condition of peers to the tourist. These peers create UGC. However, some studies point out that "a possible downside of UGC, is that while traditional forms of WOM tends to come from people who are known to the consumer (i.e. friends, colleagues, etc.), online reviews are typically passed on by total strangers, resulting in some concern over the credibility of the source" (Park et al., 2007, Litvin et al., 2008 as

cited in Burgess et al., 2009). Be that as it may, these agents promoting e-WOM are more credible than information from businesses (Senecal & Nantel, 2004 as cited in Burgess et al., 2009). Web 2.0 applications and the social media enable this interaction between users that do not know one another.

Finally, the online counterpart of the previous **tourist experience** itself is what we call augmented reality. This consists of virtual tours of destinations, Google applications that enable you to walk around the streets, 3D sights, sound and image previews of destinations and online applications of Facebook and devices such as SecondLife where tourists play a role game in other cities and visit other virtual destinations without having ever visited them physically. However, although these virtual experiences may be very well prepared, we think that in this case the virtual experience is not as credible as an offline *real* experience is. Such virtual experiences are often prepared by the destination managers themselves or by private companies who have underlying interests. Therefore, according to Gartner's (1993) logic they should not be so credible.

Figure 1.6
 Destination image formation construct including online agents



Source: Author

Once at this point we find ourselves in the context that the organic images are the most credible (according to Gartner, 1993) and it is in this category of agents that we find the brand new agents who have appeared with the web 2.0 and the content generated by other users who the tourist may or probably may not know. Such image may be the most credible and influencing, and hence its importance of study. What is said about us by users online

may nowadays be one of the most important issues to be addressed by researchers and destination managers as this will greatly influence the perception of tourists and will influence the destination itself.

About pre-trip, on-site or post-trip image, it ought to be said that with web 2.0 the pre-trip information available is much greater than before, and not only that, the pre-trip information available is notably from other tourists and users. What Dann (1996) explained, that “generally pre-trip promotion is dominated by outsiders (tour operators) whereas on-trip and post-trip senders are respectively and overwhelmingly the destination authorities (majority people) and tourists themselves” is no longer valid as today with the social media abundant pre-trip information is available coming from tourists to other tourists. If, as other authors contend, representations or pre-trip images are stronger than on-site images, then the potential influence of the social media becomes great.

1.3.2.2. Image or information dissemination online

Today, one of the key aspects to assess the relevance and potential influence of online media or of online image agents on the construction of destination image is the potential they have to disseminate their information, reach tourists and subsequently influence destination image.

Today what really matters with online image, with a rising presence of tourism information sources, is the capacity this image has to be disseminated and influence tourists. In this respect, questions such as who is the audience of the website, who is publishing its content, how many websites link it, its popularity and ranking on the Internet, how visible it is online, how much traffic it has, how usable it is, become fundamental aspects to contextualize any analysis of online media sources and understand the nature and implications of subsequent results. Knowing who is publishing and reading the content of, for example, travel blogs and reviews or of official tourism websites, becomes fundamental in a context where UGC and user-generated images are becoming dominant.

Knowing who is transmitting the image of a given destination is of interest because, among others, some argue that it is the most distant travellers, those less familiar with the destination, who may be the ones publishing more information about it because of its uniqueness for them, and may be the ones with a more distorted or stereotyped image of it. As emphasized by Carson (2008), destinations that are less familiar may be written about more as the blogger sees the opportunity to provide unique content. As the author explains, in a similar way special interest trips may be more likely to generate blogs than general interest trips, as probably the first travellers will be connected in a social group with similar interests and a high level of media consumption (including word of mouth) about their subject of interest.

The aspects directly affecting information dissemination that are most relevant for destination image transmission and influence are visibility, usage and size (Mariné-Roig, 2013). These aspects are relevant because, for example, if a website is unknown, does not receive many visits or provides very little information about a specific tourist destination, it will have little influence on the formation of a destination's tourist image and probably little impact in general. On the other hand, it is important to consider the geographical origin of the users (bloggers and readers) to assess whether their countries of origin are representative of the countries of origin of the tourists travelling to the tourist destination

under study. If the majority of users of a travel website come from countries which carry minimal weight within the composition of foreign tourism to the destination, the influence of that website will have little significance in quantitative terms on the destination.

Online Visibility of websites can be defined as the quality and quantity of inbound links a certain website has. This quality and quantity of incoming links will determine how visible a certain website is online in search engines (such as Google) and social media (such as Facebook). Online visibility can be measured through indexed pages in search engines, presence in the social media and link-based rankings (Mariné-Roig, 2013). The results of Huertas, Rovira and Fernández-Cavia (2011) show that user-administrator and user-user interactivity, more so than user-message interactivity, increase the number of inbound links, thereby enhancing website visibility, therefore increasing the possibilities of websites to be successful, especially if they included user-user (or 2.0 devices) such as “chats, spaces for uploading photos and for describing experiences, and virtual communities for discussing subjects of interest”.

Indexed pages in search engines are useful to see visibility as they are the main intermediaries in web navigation; the presence of a domain in their databases is an indicator of visibility (Aguillo, Ortega & Fernández, 2008). Search engine indexing collects, parses, and stores data to facilitate fast and accurate information retrieval (Wikipedia). With the capacity to index and organize huge amounts of information, search engines are powerful tools in representing the virtual tourism domain (Xiang et al., 2008). Search engines provide rapid and easy access to websites and information sources (Eurostat, 2011) and the majority of travellers find search engines particularly helpful in serving their trip planning purposes (Pan, Xiang, Law & Fesenmaier, 2011) as demonstrated in studies such as Sass (2011) and (Eurostat regional yearbook 2012).

The *presence in the social media* (altmetric data) of a certain website or destination is also an indicator of web visibility. However, altmetric data based on the social media are not yet well understood and give rise to several still unanswered questions (Priem, Piwowar & Hemminger, 2011). Finally, *link-based ranks* are also good metrics of visibility because a moderate increase in the number of links may improve the visibility and the navigability of the tourist destination's webspace (Baggio & Corigliano, 2009). PageRank (PR) has been the most influential of such ranking measures (Meiss, Menczer, Fortunato, Flammini, & Vespignani, 2008). PageRank measures the relative importance of web pages and has applications in searching, browsing, and traffic estimation (Page, Brin, Motwani & Winograd, 1999). Websites with a high PageRank score will tend to have more traffic and higher positions in search engines. The problem with PageRank is that it only has ten grades and it produces many joint positions when classifying websites. Meanwhile, Yandex CY (topical citation index), which is also based on the quantity and quality of links, yields more detailed rankings.

Online Usage can be defined as the number of visits and visitors and their behaviour in a website (Aguillo, 2009a). Aguillo, Ortega, Fernández and Utrilla (2010) added downloads, referrers and referrals to their usage data indicators. Usage can be measured through website popularity, geographical distribution of users and visit-based ranks. Regarding popularity, within the area of visits, the most important webometric information to measure usage of websites is the unduplicated number of people who visit a website within a specific month. That is, the unique visitor metric accounts for each person only once no matter how

many times he or she visits a site in a given month. Free access sources to obtain this type of data are: Google Trends for Websites and Google DoubleClick AdPlanner. For USA traffic, free access data can also be found with regard to visits at Compete Site Analytics and Quantcast.

Concerning the *Geographical distribution of users* in general, knowing the origin of website users is useful and interesting for assessing who is the audience of the website, and in the case of UGC websites, such as travel blog and review websites, it is useful to assess blogger representativeness of the real tourists that are visiting the destination, as is previously explained. Choi et al. (2007) point out that any content analysis should deal with generalizability and representativity issues related to the public under study. The authors also stress that bloggers' viewpoints may not be fully representative of the travelling public due to language reasons, to the very open nature of blog sites, and that images portrayed under study might not fully represent the overall destination image. Two free access sources of information to find out where the users of the websites under study are from are Google Trends for Websites and Alexa Audience.

Visit-based ranks measure which websites have a major usage or are most popular in respect of the visits they receive. Alexa Traffic Rank is the most popular website traffic measurement unit; a lower Alexa rank is a clear indication of the website's massive traffic (Thakur, Sangal, & Bindra, 2011). Bosangit, McCabe & Hibbert (2009) used the Alexa ranking to identify the most visited travel blog websites from a list obtained using the Google search engine. The Alexa Traffic Rank is based on the traffic data provided by users in Alexa's global toolbar panel over a rolling three month period. A site's ranking is based on a combined measurement of daily unique users and page views. Traffic ranks are updated daily. For USA traffic, the Compete rank is based on how many unique visitors visit the site and the Quantcast rank is based directly on traffic volume.

The concept of **Size** refers to the size of certain information content or data or how relevant they are in the website in relation to a specific subject. Because most research focuses on a specific tourist destination, size tends to refer to the geographical and/or time-period subset under study. For example size would measure the volume and effective content of blogs about a specific destination within the whole travel blog hosting website. These data can be integrated with webometric formulae such as those proposed by Mariné-Roig (2013). (See also methodology, section 2.2.9).

1.3.3. Image dissonance and congruency

Once the different online and offline agents have been explained, the issue arises of how different, dissonant or congruent the images they project are, and must be explained.

1.3.3.1. Representative dissonance

As many authors note, the issue of the discrepancy between tourist representations and the reality of destinations has been extensively debated and researched (Cohen 1993; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Xiang et al., 2008) in both online and offline contexts as "it reflects the longstanding sociological and anthropological tradition whereby the promotion of tourism is considered involving a symbolic transformation of reality which purposefully "distorts reality" in order to produce a place and time" (Hummon, 1988 as cited in Xiang et al., 2008). Indeed, the identity and representations which are projected might

influence the socially constructed “reality” of the destination. This influence might be very strong, as Kim and Richardson (2003) note from Morgan and Pritchard (1998), “the power of constructed reality is likely to dominate any sense of objective reality”. This issue becomes especially relevant with UGC and the multiplicity of tourist images being transmitted online.

Stemming from the latter is the subject of how different representations, projected by different agents, might be further from or closer to this “reality”, thus affecting “reality” differently, and of the reason why such differences exist. In this respect, the discrepancy between representations and reality is related to the debate on the role of tourist image representations upon the enhancement or destruction of local identities and to the debate on tourist image identity vs. place identity. A subjacent idea that relates both subjects is that it seems that the farther (the more different) the representations are from a supposed “real” identity, the more likely they are to destroy or disrupt local cultural identities, whereas the closer or the more similar the identity representations are to the “real” identity, the more likely it is for them to enhance and support local cultures and identities, or even serve as a mechanism for local empowerment.

In this context, the concept of “representative dissonance” (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005) arises. This concept is based on the questioning about whether the different image representations, and the identity they convey, are real or fake, in the sense of whether or not they correspond to the reality of that place and in what sense. Representative dissonance assumes that different agents project different representations which may be closer to or farther from this “reality” for multiple purposes.

Concerning the different representations which may be closer or farther from this reality, some authors contend that it is the external or foreign agents who project the images which are farther away from reality and that it is local agents, especially local governments and the local community, who project images that are closer to reality. In this respect, for example, Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997) define the destination-determined image, or induced image, as the one reflecting the reality of the destination in contrast with person-determined or organic image. However, we do not fully agree with such argument. In the case of foreign agents, it is probably true that “the tourism industry can be said to deal in images of place, culture, and ethnicity, which reflect the values, desires, and interests of the culture in which they are created more than they reflect any sort of “reality” going on in the destinations being depicted” (Adams 1984; Dann 1996; Selwyn 1996 as cited in Caton & Almeida, 2008). However, when destination-determined image is projected by various agents, it does not necessarily reflect the reality of a destination; what is more, it often reflects certain identities and elements which do not correspond to the local population constructed identity.

Today, with the generalization of UGC and web 2.0, more and more interest is being drawn to the different images existing online provided by users, and how different they are from DMO (Destination Management Organization)-produced images, or how different online sources of information depict the same destination. Supporting our view is the study of online media of the case of India by Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), which looks into the difference between the “ways that India is represented in American tourism media and how it is represented by the Indian government itself”. The authors found that the governmental representation, as depicted on India’s official tourism website, was “in some aspects similar to American representations, perhaps due to the fact that the government, in an attempt to

attract American tourists, chose to go along with the already built-in image”, but that in other aspects, “in contrast, the government’s self-representations revealed resistance to colonialist fantasies, and traces of postcolonial nationalism”.

Regarding the purposes behind such dissonance, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), acknowledge, on the one hand, the generally accepted idea that industry builds representations of destinations to “match the desires of dominant generating markets” and, on the other, the power struggles among agents (local vs. foreign) occurring at the destination which provoke that “some destinations have begun to resist those representations with media campaigns of their own”. Such a perspective is thought-provoking as it raises interest in the existence (or inexistence) of differences between the image held and projected by the local community/governments and the image projected by foreigners or external (and even internal) stakeholders or agents, and in the purposes behind these differences. As Caton and Almeida (2008) note, in this sense, it is not just interesting to see how the foreign (western in this case) agents represent a destination but to see “whether the governments of these destinations represent themselves in the same manner as the West represents them, or whether they use tourism representations as a mechanism of anticolonialism and resistance” (Mellinger, 1994 as cited in Caton & Almeida, 2008). And yet more transcendental may be the question: do local authorities project images according to the local population’s conception and will?

It is interesting to see that no single response seems to be available. The representative dissonance is an ongoing interactive process driven by contradiction. It is necessary for every destination identity and representational issue to be studied on its own, as representative dissonance can be different in each case. For example, it could well be that in some cases, local authorities project images according to foreign representations and that in others they project different images closer to local self-representations and identities, for diverse purposes. Besides, self-representations projected by local authorities may also be questioned as, possibly, the self-representation they adopt is the dominant one, very often the one representing the ruling classes or the cultural majorities in society. Whatever the case, at least it seems that images resulting from careful multilateral planning and consensus (among the population and the different tourism organizations and agents) are usually more elaborate and better represent the destination as a whole and the will of the inhabitants.

Moreover, there exist contradictions among the agents themselves: foreign agents want to project both commercial images to attract tourists as well as images of authenticity and difference. Local agents also have the contradiction of the will to attract tourists, thus fulfilling their expectations with commercial representations, but at the same time the will to project an identity of their own, what they “really” consider to be authentic for national purposes, anti-colonialism, resistance, etc. Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) note this contradictory nature of the representational process for their case of study: “as India develops and markets itself as a brand, the interpenetrations between the producer and consumer of representations—between an India hungry for foreign capital and a West craving cultural and spiritual authenticity will continue”.

However, although the question of whether local authorities or the official image is closer to reality or not may differ according to the case, it is true that the image coming from the territory (either projected by its population or by local organizations) could be considered the most legitimate. “Beyond characteristics, size, accessibility, popularity or reputation of

each destination, the contents of tourist communication strategies of a territory is usually conceived as its legitimate representation” (Anton, 2010).

Another very interesting issue, especially in today’s web 2.0 communication explosion, is the representative dissonance that may occur between the tourists’ representations of a place online and the “reality” or the self-representations of the place. As seen previously, many factors influence the perceived image formation of a destination in the minds of tourists (demographic and geographic issues, familiarity, expectations-satisfaction, personality or self-identity, perceived authenticity, etc. see more in 2.3.3). For example, as already explained, the geographical and cultural distance between the tourist’s home place and the destination, affects how tourists perceive it and how they will later represent it and transmit it to others. If, as it seems, the tourists coming from more distant places are the ones who are more likely to post or comment on a destination (as it is more special, economically costly, exotic, etc. for them) it is probable they are the ones transmitting the most distorted, stereotyped and idyllic images of the destination; such representations may be radically different from those projected and desired by the destination.

Such distant concepts and representations of place seem to affect the destination’s cultural and spatial construction. For Hugues (1995) “this has particular bearing on the interaction of tourism and destinations through encoding, within tourism, a range of partialities and expectations whose eventual expression contributes to the cultural construction of places”; as the author explains this discrimination also permeates into geographical literature contributing to construct the place. For Hall (2002), representations are an “essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture”.

The impact of such dissonance can be great as not only tourist images or representations have an impact on tourist behaviour but also on the way inhabitants define their identity. As Almeida and Buzinde (2007) explain, the ability of representations to create meanings is crucial to define and construct the identities of a place and to understand its culture and cultural capital. As previously explained (see 1.2.1.2.1 “relationship of represented identity and place identity”), several authors contend that representations, popular images of a place present in different communication channels, may influence that reality and prompt it to change, perhaps by mirroring them and recreating that same image (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Galí & Donaire, 2003).

Once at this point, the contradiction arises: although it is suggested that the farther the tourist’s home residence the more vague, idealized, distorted and stereotyped his/her image will be, it is actually the people who reside farther away from the destination who are keener to write about it in travel blogs or online social media. As explained, this fact can be easily understood if we think that distant destinations are more exotic, more costly and therefore more worth the effort of writing or commenting about them. Also on a social scale, travelling long distances is well-recognized and prestigious. This poses an enormous challenge to destination managers who should consider it carefully, as it implies that the so-called online user-generated image is probably written in principally by people who reside very far away that may have very different (stereotyped or distorted) images from that projected from the destination. Furthermore, even if these long-distance tourists have already visited the destination, stereotypes are very difficult to break and continue to mediate the experience, and hence stereotypes and preconceived ideas will be probably reflected in the image transmitted by these users-tourists online, even after the experience.

The contradiction lies in the fact that regardless of the efforts local destinations and official websites make to project certain images, nothing guarantees they will actually influence the tourist, as according to Gartner's (1993) classification DMOs are not very credible in the eyes of tourists, but instead users or other tourists are. We should not just ask how are we being represented (online) by tourists, but also: does the (online) image transmitted by tourists correspond to the one we are projecting (and that we intend tourists to perceive)?

Thus, going back to the ongoing debate on whether tourism enhances or dilutes local identities, and on how different (or dissonant) representations contribute to these phenomena, we think that the only valid solution, from our vision of tourism, must come from the local community. We believe that tourism is a tool that should contribute to the development of the local community, that it should serve local communities to achieve other goals in all aspects (culturally, economically, life quality, etc.). Therefore, if some representations make the inhabitants feel threatened culturally (or in other aspects), and whether these representations are real or not, these images are not contributing to the community's will, the will of the majority of the population, and there lies the conflict. Instead, if some identity representations enhance what the local community thinks are its real traditions (as culture is socially constructed) then it is contributing to enhance the desired local cultural image.

Moreover, some authors think that it is not just the local population's participation in image creation that is fundamental but also all the agents at the destination must participate and the image must be consensual. This participation and consensus will determine how the projected image identity or brand will serve the destination's development, the wellbeing of its inhabitants and their culture. "The emotional conceptual brand must be agreed upon by consensus, created jointly by public and private institutions and citizens of the region, which involves both the internal and external public, and is not identified with or property of a single institution, but of the whole region" (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). "The valid significance of a brand is that registered by its public. Certainly, a brand must be adopted by all the public, starting with the city's own residents, companies and institutions; and for this purpose it is fundamental that these are involved in its creation, that they adopt it as their own and thus help with its dissemination" (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

According to this perspective, the issue of representative dissonance is of high study interest because of its potential repercussion on local identities and its study should focus on how the destination and the local community's culture are being represented (by several agents, including the tourists) online (and offline), and how this differs from the social conception of the local community. Is there consensus at the destination? We should ask ourselves, as the local community, how we want to be represented and identified.

1.3.3.2. Congruency between projected and perceived images

We explained in section 1.2.3. how both projected and perceived images interact in an image construction circle where both exert an influence on one another. Hence the necessity to study both projected and perceived images, especially in new online environments. It is widely accepted that the closer both images are, the better and more congruent. Indeed, "their [marketers'] goal is to match to the greatest extent possible the promoted and perceived image" (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993 as cited in Mackay &

Fesenmaier, 1997). Congruency between images is, in general, a key objective when promoting a destination. Planas (2009) contends that the success of promotion and commercialization depends on the degree of compatibility between the perceived and the projected image of a place. However, as Choi et al. (2007) and Andreu, Bigne and Cooper (2001) explain, past literature shows that seldom do the images perceived by tourists coincide with the images projected by suppliers because of various factors involved in image formation.

Govers (2010) suggests the concept of “gap bridging” which aims to address destination brand gaps at different levels (see figure 1.2). For the author, addressing the gap between projected image and perceived image and determining what is the perceived identity of the destination is a fundamental part of place brand analysis.

However, Mercille (2005) asserts that image studies have only focused either on projected image by agents or on perceived image of tourists and gathers from different authors that “few studies examine both representations and perceptions empirically, an undertaking often incidental to a larger research focus”; thus, “examinations of both and assessments of their congruence are lacking”. As Mercille (2005) notes in his case study of Tibet, in general projected images have been widely studied but instead perceived images had been neglected. This general tendency seems to occur very often in other destinations. According to our vision of tourist image, and to understand tourist image dynamics and its process of construction, both parts of image (projected and perceived) must be studied. In fact, there is a literature gap on this point. In Mercille’s (2005) case, the author tries to fill such gap by comparing the image within mass media artefacts (such as movies, books and magazines) of a destination (Tibet) with tourist perceived images. More specifically, the author consults tourists prior to their trips about their imagination/perceptions of the destination in order to assess their congruence (or lack thereof) of their images and the ones presented in the media artefacts. The greater the congruence, the greater the media effect on destination image formation.

Mercille (2005) suggests three possible scenarios concerning the way tourists perceive and interpret projected images, which could lead to minor or major gaps between both types of images: tourists may decode media messages through the code in which they were encoded by producers; they may decode them in a negotiated way in which opposition and adaptation to them mixes; and they “may interpret media messages in ways totally oppositional to the encoded ones, subverting intended meanings”. Although, the author found that “audiences decode messages in terms of the reference code in which they have been encoded by producers” as Hall suggested, the study also indicates that this decoding could be negotiated and that audiences “may interpret media messages in ways oppositional to the encoded messages” due to imagination, popular culture, other representations, wider discourses, etc. (Mercille, 2005) thus creating image perception gaps that should be addressed.

Other authors have used the basic projected vs. perceived dichotomy to analyse tourism image congruency (Galí & Donaire, 2003; Andreu et al., 2001; Planas, 2009). In this sense, Andreu et al. (2001) contribute to shed light on the issue by analysing the relationship between the perceived and projected image of Spain in the British market. What the authors note is that a gap exists between both images. Possible causes of such gap or differences are “the influences of other factors in the behaviour of the consumer. The information the

consumer receives tends to be limited and simplified by stereotypes and also by the influence of sources of information that cannot be controlled by those who are responsible for the marketing of the destination". To solve the problem of the gap between projected and perceived images, Andreu et al. (2001) recommend a consumer-focused orientation in marketing focusing on the factors that influence consumer destination choice.

The term "congruency" between perceived and projected images is coined to measure the gap between both types of image. Indeed, what Dinnie (2008) calls "nation branding" is a tool usually used by official tourism organizations to reduce such identity-image gap by identifying prejudices and misperceptions and by enabling the dismantlement and opposition to several negative forces. Dinnie (2008) mentions the example of France to explain how the perception gap existing between projected and perceived image identity can affect not only culture but also the economy. For some countries, France is seen as innovative and technologically advanced while for others it is perceived as being the contrary. In this sense, the French government recognized that correcting this image discrepancy was important for the success of its economy and its inward investment levels, and launched a campaign to counteract the negative image of the country.

Another interesting case of study measuring congruence is that of Huong Bui (2011) who explores the destination image attributes perceived by foreign visitors, on the one hand, and examines the government's projected image of Vietnam, on the other. The author then measures "the level of congruence between destination image projected by the tourism public sector and the image perceived by international tourists". For the authors this will help Vietnam as a tourism destination to attract more and more visitors in order to significantly improve tourism growth as supported by the literature about destination image (Cai, 2002; Koerte, 2009; Le & Cooper, 2009 as cited in Bui, 2011).

Moreover, some authors comment that the gap between projected and perceived images is indeed a gap between the reality of the destination and what is perceived by tourists. Veenstra (2012), commenting on branding, explains that there is the possibility that "there is a gap between the reality of the region and the perceptions that are held in key markets". Hence, "many destinations struggle with the frustration of not being perceived correctly by the rest of the world" as "stereotypes and clichés can dominate perceptions of destinations". Indeed, "Prejudices and misperceptions are extremely difficult to change" as well as "(Unjustified) negative perceptions" (Veenstra, 2012). "Simply initiating a nation branding communication campaign often does not combat the underlying factors that influence the public's current image of a country. Therefore, it is important to have a holistic strategy that includes understanding the current state of a nation's brand, identifying the many factors that influence it, developing a strategy (through more than just an advertising or public relations campaign), implementing that strategy, and tracking progress over time" (Agustine, 2009).

DMOs are increasingly gathering customer feedback online with the aim of staying competitive by learning about potential issues such as gaps in destination image perceptions (Banyai & Glover, 2011). In studies on online media, the subject of image congruency is starting to be developed, and tourist image gaps are now starting to be identified. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of this issue.

In an online environment, Krizman and Belullo (2007) aimed to identify the image representations of Istria as a tourism destination on the Internet, and understand the importance of the Internet as an agent creating tourism destination image. Their results show a representative dissonance or incongruence across the different online travel information categories (ICTO, blogs, guides, magazines, travel trade). This indicates that the image intended by Istria's tourism authorities is not being successfully delivered to tourists, and that this congruency is then transferred to the online medium.

Choi et al. (2007) identify the image representations of Macau on the Internet by analysing the contents of a variety of web information sources, including several online media projecting image and the perceived image of users in travel blogs. This research was undertaken to understand the multiplicity of destination image representations on the web and the challenges of managing and delivering the desired image of a destination online. The authors aimed to shed light on the dialectic views of the official tourism image, trade and general travelling public. As the authors explained, the bloggers' viewpoints, to some extent, represented the perceived image of the targeted travelling public, while the MGTO/travel trade's choices of words and visuals reflected the projected or intended images of Macau. The results of this study indicate a dissimilarity between both images which clearly indicated a level of incongruence in Macau's destination image. They conclude that "the intended or desired image by the Macau tourism authorities was not being successfully delivered to the English-speaking traveling public". In addition, this study found that travel intermediaries, publishers, the destination marketing organization, and tourists project different online images of Macau.

Chen et al. (2008) study precisely the image perception gaps existing between tourist blogs and travel information by comparing their contents and by developing two matrices of image perception gaps of Kaohsiung City (Taiwan). Their design aims to explore destination image and recognize destination image formation. They wanted to figure out the distributions of destination image attributes among domestic tourists, foreign tourists, and KCG travel information. Their results showed considerable image gaps between foreign tourists and official information in such aspects as culture, history and art, gastronomy, customs and ways of life. Bloggers focused on more exotic elements of local culture and emphasized the aspect of gastronomy.

Koerte (2009) carried out a study comparing the congruency between the projected and the perceived images of Tanzania. Official tourism websites were content analysed to extract projected image, and travel blogs were content analysed to obtain perceived image of the tourist. In her results, the author finds that although there is a relative level of congruency among projected and perceived images (both focus on culture and use positive descriptive terms) there were some incongruities on issues such as the attractions mentioned, the luxury vs. poverty theme and volunteer tourism.

In spite of these studies, Chen et al. (2008) identify that still little research has been conducted to analyse the image held by tourists and by DMOs simultaneously, and this aspect should be further developed. Pitt et al. (2008) point out the need to study the image present in other online sources such as blogs and then compare it to official image to spot the gaps and ways to improve brand image. It seems necessary that in the current context of generalized Internet communication, image congruency is studied in this environment,

especially between perceived image by tourists posting image online and destination produced images because of the implications this congruency may have.

Today, knowing exactly what the social media and users say about a destination, such as in blogs, and how this differs from what the destination (DMOs or official Tourism Websites) says or would like others to say about it, is of crucial importance not just for policy making but also for the impact it may have on the destination, to understand the same social, natural and cultural elements and changes, the identity issues taking place at the destination and its sustainability in many areas. Indeed, should Ateljevic and Doorne's (2002) statement "the identities of destinations around the world are endlessly reinvented as marketing creates powerful social and cultural representations of place" be changed? Should we now be increasingly on the path towards the idea that -the identities of destinations around the world are endlessly reinvented as the social media and users create powerful and social and cultural representations of place-.

1.3.4. Web 2.0

In the following sections we will develop the subject of web 2.0, the fundamental communicative facilitating platform through which the new image-projecting online agents, peers unknown to the tourist posting information, are able to transmit images.

Web 2.0 is "the second generation of web-based services that have gained massive popularity by letting people collaborate and share information online in previously unavailable ways" (Reactive, 2007 as cited in Cox et al., 2008a). According to Cox et al. (2008a), broadly it must be understood as a type of website which gives more capabilities of use to users than traditional websites, especially in terms of interactivity and flexibility, and that mixes different services that were only available separately. 2.0 developments have led to major user-friendliness of online contents and platforms. These websites "have gained massive popularity by letting people collaborate and share information online in previously unavailable ways. With Web 2.0 any individual can post their own content, opinions, videos, audio or imagery to the web for other users to see and respond to" (Cox et al., 2008b). Indeed web 2.0 "is one of the main features of this so-called participative web" (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007).

Web 2.0 is especially outstanding. According to O'Reily (2005), the main promotor of the conception of Web 2.0, this is constituted by seven basic pillars: The World Wide Web as a work platform, the strengthening of collective intelligence and memory, the primordial management of databases, the end of the cycle of actualizations of software versions, the search for simplicity, software focused on portability, and enriching experiences of users. Cox et al. sum up these characteristics by saying they include "the ability to integrate information in new ways, the desire to harness distributed knowledge, and the need to engage users as co-developers" (2008a). From this conception, the taxonomic structure of Web 2.0 is based on four fundamental lines, according to Cobo and Pardo (2007): *Social Networking*, Contents, Social and intelligent organization of information and applications and mashups (as cited in Filgueira, 2008).

The **social media** are eminently based on web 2.0: Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content"(as cited in Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012). Fotis et al. (2012) gathered

data on the phenomenal popularity rise of the social media among Internet users: Facebook claims that its active users reached more than 750 million worldwide, spending more than 700 billion minutes per month (Facebook, 2011); Twitter hosts 175 million users who, on an average week, post one billion tweets (Twitter, 2011); YouTube users view daily over 3 billion videos (YouTube, 2011); and it is estimated that there are over 170 million blogs worldwide (BlogPulse.com, 2011). Fotis et al. (2012) analyse the impact of the social media on holiday travel, throughout the travel planning process.

Web 2.0 communication is assimilated by many to that of friends and relatives proposed by Gartner (1993) because of their credibility and trustworthiness. "More frequently visited [2.0] websites include MySpace.com, YouTube.com, and Flickr.com" (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Some authors contend that web 2.0 is leading to social changes. "Premiss of the TechWatch report is that it is the powerful ideas of Web 2.0 that will have impact in longer term, not the individual technical manifestations" (Anderson, 2008). All this user-generated content, massive data collection, crowd sourcing etc. convey big ideas and lead to big changes, which entail "a major paradigm shift that is changing business and some argue society" (Anderson, 2008).

In tourism, this new way of interacting and sharing information with 2.0 technologies called, Travel 2.0. "is a new Internet model to consult, publish, share, discuss and distribute tourism information, the content of which is created by users interacting with each other" (Filgueira, 2008). Travel 2.0 sites allow users to publish words, images, reviews and travelogues and "with the rising popularity of sites that contain content submitted by real travellers [...] the ways that travellers search for, view and evaluate travel information is potentially changing" (Cox et al., 2008b).

1.3.4.1. Characteristics of Web 2.0

For Anderson (2007, 2008), six big ideas define web 2.0, and unite all the elements belonging to it (including Travel 2.0 sites): 1. It consists of User-Generated Content, 2. It harnesses the power of the crowds, 3. Data is shared on an epic scale, 4. It is grounded on the architecture of participation, 5. It facilitates network effects, 6. Openness. These points will be further developed and explained, especially the one referring to User-Generated Content.

1.3.4.1.1. User-generated content and e-WOM

User-generated content (UGC), or self-production of content, can be considered the latest revolution on the Internet. "Since Web 2.0 has begun to change the way consumers engage with information on the Internet, the terms 'User-Generated Content' (UGC) or Consumer-Generated Media (CGM) are commonly used to highlight the pivotal role that individual consumers have in submitting, reviewing and responding to online content" (Cox et al., 2008b). Fernando (2007) suggests that UGC is the opposite to traditional forms of media and marketing since content is generated by the consumer rather than by the marketer (as cited in Burgess et al., 2009).

There has been an explosion of self-generated contents (videos, music, blog text, photos). "The different content types text, images, audio, video, customer reviews/feedbacks, educational content, mobile content, virtual content as well as citizen journalism are offered via lots of distribution platforms such as blogs, wikis (text-based collaboration formats), feedback-allowing sites like Amazon.com, group-based aggregation like del.icio.us,

podcasting, hosting sites like Youtube and Flickr, social networking sites like Facebook, virtual worlds like Second Life, news sites and legal filesharing sites” (Clever, Kirchner, Schray & Schulte, 2009).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has proposed three main characteristics of UGC:

- Publication requirement: The UGC must be published in some context (e.g. on a website or on a social networking website).
- Creative effort: “A certain amount of creative effort has to be put into creating the work. An important aspect is that users [...] add their own value to the work”.
- Creation outside of professional routines and practices: Typically UGC is created without the “expectation of [...] remuneration or profit” for multiple motivations (in Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007).

The creation and expansion of UGC has the potential to grow even faster and broader. Barriers of entry to UGC “have been lowered dramatically by cheap video cams, proquality digital cameras, software etc.” (Anderson, 2008). Likewise, “UGC is a powerful driver amongst the young - “Digital Natives” - who are spending more time creating and networking on the Web than watching TV or reading newspapers” (Anderson, 2008). “Tools such as blogs and social networking sites (such as Facebook) have meant that consumers are better informed than ever before – not only being able to add their own comments, but also being able to find other information and articles and ‘tag’ them with their own keywords for search purposes” (Buhler, 2006 as cited in Burgess et al., 2009). The numbers speak of this expansion: “adoption of these sites is rapidly increasing”. Clever et al. (2009) cite Wikipedia as the perfect example of a UGC-driven website that has been highly successful and has grown immensely since its creation.

One of the communicative phenomena generated by UGC online is the **electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)** otherwise called electronic “Word-of-Mouse” (Riedl, Konstan & Vrooman, 2002), easily accessible, usually written and anonymous (Volo, 2010a). UGC when transmitted and received online acts similarly to traditional word-of-mouth, a highly influential way of communication.

Generally speaking, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is informal communication and occurs in user-generated content (UGC) which is published by the user him/herself and not by a professional editor (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004 as cited in Stangl., 2010). E-WOM serves tourists to post their own contents, share experiences and give their opinions to others about destinations, products and services. Through web 2.0, a new method of communication is created that is similar to word-of-mouth and empowers consumers (Pan et al., 2007). This type of word-of-mouth differs from the traditional one in that content is published on the Internet on a global scale enabling anyone, anywhere in the world to access it (Filgueira, 2008). Proximity and familiarity between information sender and receiver is not necessary in online word-of-mouth. Furthermore, it is asynchronous and posts have the potential to reach millions of viewers (Bickart & Schindler, 2002 in Mack, Blose & Pan, 2008).

There is typically far more information available to the consumer in the online environment from eWOM than from traditional WOM (Chatterjee, 2001 as cited in Burgess et al., 2009).

E-WOM, similarly to WOM, is said to be very influential over tourists. Such a huge amount of information available for users and the power of influence it may have on them, has aroused much interest on the subject by both researchers and practitioners. Stangl (2010) points out that there are already studies investigating the use of web 2.0-based websites which provide e-WOM information and that these studies mainly focus on motivational aspects for reading UGC such as blog entries, ratings, reviews, or videos. It can be said that, blogs have become increasingly ubiquitous in recent years (Mack et al., 2008).

Furthermore, e-WOM has the particularity of being a dynamic and interactive phenomenon, on a much larger scale than traditional WOM. Communication has radically changed with the active and inter-active use of the Internet by users. Before, websites only projected one way communication to users, similarly to TV. However, now, with web 2.0 and the creation of UGC, the phenomenon of e-WOM occurs in which content is continuously created, users interact, comment, and modify content; in which users suggest and recommend and answer questions. This change from a relatively static process to one that is completely dynamic and interactive, embodied in e-WOM is one fundamental value of UGC online. Even if users had been able to post content online, if the e-WOM phenomenon had not occurred UGC would not have the value and interest it has now.

Indeed, the tourism field is one in which users are fully immersed in UGC creation and e-WOM communication. "These days, many websites allow consumers to add their own content in the form of general text comments (weblogs or 'blogs'), travel reviews, pictures and/or video" (Burgess et al., 2009). Burgess et al. (2009) mention some examples of UGC related to travel and tourism: "ordinary people sharing their opinions about travel destinations, attractions and accommodation properties through blogs (weblogs) or other discussion forums", "travellers submitting photos or videos to the internet to share their travel experiences with other online users (including family, friends or total strangers who may be interested)", "consumers posting reviews of accommodation properties to sites such as tripadvisor.com", "people using social networking sites such as myspace.com, facebook.com or youtube.com to share travel information".

In the tourism and travel fields, increasingly more people seem to be engaging with UGC too. The study by Cox et al. (2008b) revealed that "the main way people found out about travel UGC sites was through Google (76%), 'by accident' while looking for travel information online (45%) or by referral from family or friends (33%)". Moreover, their results suggest that tourists access a selected wide range of sites containing UGC as part of their travel planning process (Cox et al., 2008b). The authors' findings support the idea that "UGC sites are mainly used when a destination has been chosen and the traveller is searching for accommodation options or trying to narrow down the choice of destinations" (Cox et al., 2008a,b). The authors also found in the survey they carried out that 32% of the respondents (4,014 people) had not used any UGC site for their previous travel planning. However, this percentage in recent years has probably decreased substantially as people are using UGC more and more. In addition, the survey found that of these, 88% of the people indicated they would find it useful in future, supporting this idea. Cox et al. (2008b) also note from Pan and Fesenmaier's (2006) study about online travel planning that consumers sought information related to ten key sub-decisions: travel partners, the destination, expenditure required, activities, travel dates, attractions to visit, transportation providers, length of trip, rest stops, and food.

As Govers et al., (2007a) put it, in tourism “the use of the Internet radically changes the communication process”. As Govers et al. (2007a) explain, we passed from the traditional media of “the language of tourism” (Dann, 1996) based on the unilateral and monologist communication of Western agents (tour operators) to Western receivers (tourist), to the electronic “Word-of-Mouse” (Riedl et al., 2002)”. Tourist “image formation is no longer a one-way “push” process of mass communication, but a dynamic one of selecting, reflecting, sharing, and experiencing” (Govers et al., 2007a).

The interest of researchers and of tourism organizations towards UGC and e-WOM in tourism comes mainly because of the high **influence and effects** this may potentially have on user-tourist behaviour, decisions, expectations and perceptions. Indeed, “amongst the vast array of information sources consumers can turn to when planning travel, word-of-mouth is one of the most influential” (Burgess et al., 2009). Many contend UGC sites and e-WOM have a special power of influence (Cox et al., 2008b). As previously explained, perceived tourist image highly influences tourism behaviour and travel decision-making. Today the role of web 2.0 and UGC in forming tourists’ image is increasingly influential and is clearly affecting tourists’ behaviour, the decisions taken, the expectations the tourist will have, etc.

At this point we can see the great current importance of studying image in online user spaces or web 2.0 as “by going through this process and collecting all this information, the consumer creates an image” (Govers et al, 2007a). Indeed, it is now through this process of interaction, which is held by many online, that tourists form their (preconceived or pre-trip) images of a destination. “Tourism operators and destination marketing organisations cannot ignore the rising popularity of sites containing UGC content nor the role that they are playing in the trip planning behaviour of travellers”; UGC can provide information that influences the final booking plans associated with travel, or even cause travellers to alter their existing travel plans (Cox et al., 2008b).

All this context propitiates that the prescriptive capacity of user-generated content of tourism content becomes determinant within the travel cycle and process. In this respect, the study of Cox et al. (2008a) shows how tourists perceive the influence or impact exerted by UGC on the travellers’ final trip-planning outcomes. The tourists were asked about their likelihood of taking a final decision related to booking a trip or travel product because of the influence of user-generated content. They were also asked about their likelihood of changing their current travel plans because of the influence of UGC. The results indicated the influence of UGC can be very important: 51% of respondents indicated they would make a final decision about booking a trip due to the influence of UGC (25% unlikely and 24% unsure), 28% of respondents stated they would change their existing travel plans due to the influence of UGC (43% were unlikely to change and 29% were unsure).

The study by Cox et al. (2008a) reveals several implications and impacts UGC has on tourist behaviour: UGC is becoming a powerful ‘conversion’ tool as it reassures travellers about their travel choices, especially once the travel search has been narrowed down. Of the people surveyed in their study in 2007, a considerable number of respondents (15%) always used UGC sites when travelling, and 64% used them occasionally. Moreover 30% of respondents said UGC sites were ‘very influential’ when booking online travel, and 50% of them said it had a ‘certain influence’. The authors mention that according to IgoUgo the integration of user-generated content into travel websites has been found to increase booking conversions by 10% and cite several studies showing that the influence UGC exerts

on consumers and that the influence it has on their decision-making process and purchase is high. The study by Cox et al. (2008a) was performed in 2007 and probably now these percentages have increased substantially.

It should be noted that this influence may not be equal for all types of travellers but it can be said that it is highly influential. For instance, prospective travellers often rely heavily on advice from friends, family and other peer groups, particularly when planning travel to a destination not previously visited (Litvin et al., 2008 in Burgess et al., 2009). Moreover, several factors seem to affect how strong this influence is, coming from user-generated-content or e-WOM: "The degree of integrity, expertise and honesty related to the content that is posted online has an important impact on the level of influence of UGC on the consumer" (Cox et al., 2008a). In this regard, some studies investigate how travel-related UGC websites were being used by consumers. Research by Cox et al. (2008a) captured traveller perceptions with respect to how such sites impacted on their information search and travel behaviour.

One of the key factors that makes UGC so influential in all aspects, notably perceived image formation, and that enables the e-WOM phenomenon to occur, is that user-generated content is considered to be highly **trustworthy** (Burgess et al., 2009). In fact, one of the key points of the success of UGC and e-WOM is its trustworthiness or credibility.

It is generally assumed that, as word-of-mouth communication is so credible, e-WOM would also be highly trustworthy. Some research mentioned by Cox et al. (2008a) backs up this idea: in an online survey of more than 800 travellers by Nielsen/Net Ratings, more than half the respondents indicated that user-generated reviews provided on-site such as TripAdvisor.com were the most reliable source of travel information. Huertas et al. (2011) conclude that "positive anecdotes from other users, especially when they include enthusiastic comments and photographs, are more motivational and convincing than a tourist brochure or information". Fotis et al. (2012) show how information provided by other travellers in various websites and the social media are the most trustworthy sources of information for travellers only after their friends' and relatives'. The perceived trustworthiness is stronger than that attributed to official tourism websites, shows and documentaries, travel agents and general advertisements (Fotis et al., 2012).

However, other research indicates that several factors influence the perceived credibility or trustworthiness of UGC, and that UGC is not "automatically" trusted. Indeed, the very same criticism regarding UGC's power of influence comes from its trustworthiness or lack thereof. As Burgess et al. (2009) explain, "criticism regarding the power of UGC to persuade travellers about travel related decisions is based on the potential for 'fake' content to be posted by travel operators posing as independent reviewers" (Burgess et al., 2009). The concern about this trustworthiness comes from the fact that users cannot be sure someone is independent and is not paid by a business or tourism organization (Burgess et al., 2009).

In this sense, Burgess et al. (2009) conducted research on the credibility and trustworthiness of e-WOM and identified a series of 'paradoxes' in relation to the benefits and concerns related to online travel recommendations. The authors try to see "if the benefits (in relation to well-reasoned reviews, plentiful sources of information and credibility) and concerns (such as extreme opinions, fake content, unknown sources and low credibility) actually do exist" in the travel-related UGC. Their study identified three concerns users have when they encounter UGC or e-WOM information online: these are the content, the source and the

nature of recommendations. These three concerns are linked for instance, “where commercial sources are seen to post fake content to bias the behaviour of potential travellers”. The *Content* category concerns extreme or emotional postings vs. well-argued posting and possible fake content. The *Source* category relates to the notion that e-WOM provides more sources of recommendation and comments with a high level of creditability (from independent consumers) vs. the ones provided by businesses with vested interests. The nature of recommendations refers to their influence due to the nature of tourism as a product and the ability of tourists to filter relevant information (Burgess et al., 2009). Depending on these three factors and their variables UGC will be perceived as trustworthy or not. Seemingly contradictorily the authors found that “for just about every benefit (‘like’) that is identified by survey respondents there is a matching ‘concern’ that is also identified”. For example some people’s ‘extreme opinions’ in UGC were positive whilst for others they were a concern. Many respondents mentioned the credibility of UGC as being a benefit, whilst at the same time it was considered a concern too (Burgess et al., 2009).

Although the results of Burgess et al. (2009) show that users may not always trust UGC or that they are concerned about the credibility of UGC, among other issues, we contend that at least for users who are familiarized with online environments and who usually post online contents and participate in online travel communities, travel blogs, etc. it is probably notably credible and reliable. Indeed, “sites containing UGC are perceived as being useful by people who use them” (Cox et al., 2008b) and probably also as being trustworthy. Therefore UGC and e-WOM will potentially have a profound influence on the image formation of the tourists who are most used to web 2.0 and will gain major influence as people progressively embrace web 2.0.

1.3.4.1.2. Harnessing the power of the crowds

Web 2.0 and the capacity to create UGC gives ordinary people enormous power of communication and information transmission. With UGC, the user is now in control of how information is presented and consumed (O’Connor, 2010). Users have gone from being passive receivers of information to also being communicators interacting with other users (Huertas et al., 2011).

UGC is in part inspired in “punk rock fanzines and do-it-yourself bands” (Anderson, 2008). In this respect, we see that web 2.0 may be inspired in what is called the Do It Yourself (DIY) philosophy. “The DIY ethic refers to the ethic of self-sufficiency through completing tasks oneself as opposed to having others who are more experienced or able complete them for one’s behalf. It promotes the idea that an ordinary person can learn to do more than he or she thought was possible” (Wikipedia). DIY is based on the empowerment of individuals and communities who seek knowledge and expertise themselves without recurring to external specialists (Wikipedia). “Collaboration between individuals has come to the fore in a manner unimaginable in the past, making it more difficult for marketers to craft sales messages and position them in front of the consumer” (O’Connor, 2010).

Today, services are “making increasing use of the power of the crowd on the Internet” (Anderson 2008). It is what James Surowiecki (2004) calls the “Wisdom of crowds”. Such collective wisdom or knowledge is created by the contribution of thousands of individuals both acting independently and collectively at the same time (Anderson, 2008). Web 2.0 allows “for time and place independent cooperation between users” (Stanoevska-Slabeva,

2008 as cited in Stangl, 2010). Moreover, web 2.0 involves trusting users as co-developers (Stangl, 2010). Giving an example of this wisdom of crowds applied to Wikipedia vs. a traditional encyclopaedia: “The logic behind this collaborative approach is that over time, successive modifications will result in entries that are more comprehensive, more relevant, and more current than those found in static paper publications” (O’Connor, 2010).

It can be said that web 2.0 is actually made of collective intelligence (Gruber, 2007; Stangl, 2010). This creates an empowerment of the popular knowledge and creates the tendency to “ask the audience” when looking for information. This is called “Crowdsourcing” and entails the “rise of the amateur” (Anderson, 2008). Indeed the goal of web 2.0 services is to “mutually maximize the collective intelligence of the participants” (Hoegg et al., 2006 as cited in Stangl, 2010).

1.3.4.1.3. Other characteristics

- Data are shared on an epic scale

Another characteristic of web 2.0 and of the Internet is that data and information are generated on epic scales. As Anderson (2008) explains, we generate and make use of increasing amounts of data; it is what von Baeyer calls the invisible rain of information (in the book “Information: the new language of science”); Web 2.0 companies capture data then process, aggregate and turn it into mighty rivers. As Anderson explains, Tim O’Reilly was clear in his original paper that those companies that can collect and manage data on a large scale are successful. The best example of data on an epic scale must be that of Google’s database which “is measured in 100s of peta-bytes (a million, billion). Much collected indirectly from the user each time they use a service such as Google or Ebay”.

Concerning this O’Connor comments that “Increased quantities of information can be both a blessing and a curse” as it can complicate decision-making, confuse the user or lead to dissatisfaction (O’Connor, 2010).

- The architecture of participation

Anderson (2008) explains that a subtle concept and a key idea of O’Reilly’s (2005) paper is the architecture of participation, giving equal weight to both worlds. As Anderson (2008) explains, “the way a service is designed facilitates mass participation”. A crucial idea of this architecture of participation is that the more people use the service, the better or richer it gets (Stangl, 2010; Anderson, 2008).

Cox et al. (2008b) point out that despite the importance of web 2.0’s structural features, there has been minimal research “on the technical and functional design effectiveness of these sites”. For the authors, “it is useful for tourism marketers to be aware of the importance of website usability if they intend to develop their online marketing strategies and include UGC. With their high degree of user interactivity, UGC sites potentially bring a new design dimension to online user behaviour and website use”. Arguably, the website design features of such sites, with their focus on user-generated content, should be highly usable. For Cox et al. (2008b) the usability design features for web 2.0 sites are for it to have 1. No splash page, 2. No frames, 3. Logo present, 4. The *About Us* page, 5. The search

feature, 6. The Privacy policy, 7. Body text- adjusts for screen size, 8. Unvisited links- blue, 9. Visited links- non blue, 10. Download option.

The technologies applied hide technical details and allow users without technical knowledge not only to download things from the Internet but also to actively participate and upload content (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006 as cited in Stangl, 2010). Users can participate for instance by 'posting', 'tagging', 'digging', or 'blogging' (Stangl, 2010).

- Network effects

As explained by Anderson (2008) there are billions of users on the Net, who create gigantic linked graphs. Understanding the effects of such large networks and topology is increasingly important. "The potential for knowledge sharing today is unmatched in history. Never before have so many creative and knowledgeable people been connected by such an efficient, universal network" (Gruber, 2007). The technological progress over the past years has enabled large parts of the general public to access and afford new ways of interaction and communication via the Internet's new intelligent web services and fast broadband connections (Clever et al., 2009).

Gruber (2007) built a scheme by which a web holding collective intelligence can become a collective knowledge system or network. These systems must have in common UGC, the information must be provided by humans participating in a social process, there must be a human-machine synergy, they provide more domain coverage, diversity of perspective, and sheer volume of information than could be achieved by searching "official" literature or talking to experts, there are increasing returns with scale, as more people contribute, the system gets more useful, they are sources of emergent Knowledge. "The system enables computation and inference over the collected information, leading to answers, discoveries, or other results that are not found in the human contributions" (Gruber, 2007).

Anderson (2008) poses several questions: What shape is the Web? (O'Reilly, 2005 argued that companies that understood this would succeed); Combined with ideas like user-generated content and mass sharing equals to a new social fabric? (Anderson, 2008)

- Openness

Web 2.0 continues the tradition of openness on the Internet. Openness is understood by "open standards, using open source software, free re-use of data" (Anderson, 2008). One example of this re-use of data in mash-ups is Google Earth. It also conveys Open APIs. However, some concerns have been growing on issues such as privacy and the scale of data being collected. Anderson (2008) raises the question, would Copyright be under assault?

1.3.4.2. Intentionality and power struggles in image projection with web 2.0

The power struggles occurring among different image-projecting agents, and their different images, explained previously, also extend to the virtual arena, and are present in online image, in a new way of interacting among actors. The processes of interaction, such as socialization among actors, and power clashes also occur online. The physical space (of the destination), mentioned before, becomes indirect to the new online interactions as these occur in an online medium; most of the actors also exist in non-virtual environments but the interaction is not primarily carried out in those places but in a common virtual space. The

agents involved in the power struggles through the Internet might be similar to those in the offline world, but have their own personality on the net; they do not have the same power of influence and their individualities seem to dilute. Besides, the Internet enables making new connections and interactions among agents and their images that were not possible before. Actors that are thousands of kilometres apart now interact in this common space.

In many cases the image projected online is created and transmitted by the same agents who project image offline or by agents with similar purposes to those operating offline (for example exclusively online travel agencies have similar purposes to offline agencies). Thus, the power struggles related to opposing or different intentionalities occur. Many agents online continue to have an economic profit in a more or less beneficial way for the community and the destination as their main objective for image creation and projection. Some other agents may have more political or socio-cultural objectives to project image online. And many other agents online have social or leisure intentionalities behind their image projection activities. In this sense, cultural identity conflicts may occur online and colonial or nationalist interests may be behind images.

In general, online images must be positioned in the same way as offline images towards the debate of whether tourist image contributes to the enhancement or erasure of local cultural identities, and whether it contributes or not to the well-being in many aspects of the local community and to the development of the destination. Again, in online image this will depend on the morality and ethics of image, it will depend on who projects it and with what purpose.

In relation to the latter, the most remarkable (and relatively new) intentionality behind images online is that associated to user-generated content and the interactive web 2.0. This is the social/leisure motivation in image creation that has revolutionized the concept of online image and changed the way power struggles in image projection occur. Such users do not have any clear political or economic intention *a priori*. The intentions of these new agents are mainly related to social and leisure motivations (see agents' intentions section 1.2.1.1.1.), they do not aim to influence the tourist, but to socialize with other people, which radically changes the conception of agents' intentionality in image projection and creation nowadays. We should remember that all the other types of intentions behind images have the conscious goal of influencing the tourist and this does not. Moreover, these images projected with social intentions gain weight to the detriment of traditional local image strategies probably aiming at economic, cultural or political objectives.

Some studies have addressed the subject of online-users' intentions when creating content. In a very interesting study on online social networks, Casaló (2009) points out that belonging to a community allows the individual to fulfil emotional needs and to answer transcendental questions: Who am I? Where do I belong? What connects me to the world and to others? What do I get from others? What is important for me?

Cox et al., (2008a) comment that "while there is no doubt that an increasing number of people are accessing and reviewing sites containing user-generated content, not all are doing so merely as a form of information search to inform purchase decisions". As Cox et al. (2008a) note from iProspect (2007), existing research shows that people's motivations for visiting social networking sites are multiple, ranging from pure entertainment to networking with others as well as searching for products and services.

The **reasons** why people have turned to publishing their own content online are multiple too. Different theories on social networking offer different perspectives of the subject of users' motivations to participate and interact in online social networks. Casaló (2009) gives us a detailed overview of the different perspectives: from a sociological point of view, Preece (2000) identifies 4 basic purposes of virtual social networks: exchanging information, offering support to other users, conversing and establishing relationships, talking about subjects of the user's interest. The theory of social exchange postulates that users who participate obtain some future compensation, such as prestige, social status, respect, etc. Social identity theory exposes that the users' unity sensation motivates cooperation and contribution to the net. Value perception theory exposes that members contribute to a community according to the values they obtain from it: Dholakia et al. (2004) identify five value types: 1. Intention values, 2. Knowing oneself, 3. Establish interpersonal relationships, 4. Socially improve, 5. Entertainment and fun values (as explained in Casaló, 2009). Bosangit and Mena (2009) point out self-identity construction, life-documenting, communication; social networking, information exchange and entertainment. Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) assess that motivating factors include connecting with peers, achieving fame, notoriety or prestige, and expressing oneself. Anderson (2008) suggests that the tendency to publish UGC online increases because of the reputation and "exposure culture", where "getting noticed is everything" (Anderson, C., "Long Tail" as cited in Anderson, 2008).

Clever et al. (2009), making a compound of different studies, assess that the main reasons to blog are: to be creative and entertain others and oneself, self-expression, especially feelings and thinking, to share experiences and document one's life, to socialize, interact and belong to specific communities thereby making new friends and staying in touch with old ones, and to inform others. Some authors such as Casaló (2009) also identify very practical reasons for participation in virtual communities, such as blogs compared to traditional communities. These are related to the great possibilities of communication they offer, since thanks to the Internet, these types of communities overcome temporal and spatial barriers to interaction that are present in traditional communities (Andersen, 2005 as cited in Casaló, 2009). Some authors stress that this type of content creation is not motivated by remuneration (Clever et al., 2009; Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007).

Within this context, and conscious of these new intentionalities behind user-generated image, some comments must be made about the power struggles occurring: before, the traditional agents and their projected images online (DMOs, travel agencies, hotels, guidebooks, etc.) represented vested interests and therefore were involved in active (or conscious) struggles to become dominant and to be seen for multiple purposes, mostly moved by an economic interest. In spite of that, the actors projecting image through web 2.0 usually participate in power struggles with a more 'unconscious' role or objective. Somehow it seems that the manipulation of image that has traditionally been undertaken by agents to serve their purposes and influence the tourist is not done in the same way by these new agents-users. These new 2.0 agents may have some interest in their opinions being heard by others, but not necessarily to influence them. Therefore, the image with which tourists now come into contact online through the social media, may not be consciously manipulated both in the eyes of transmitters and receivers. Hence, user-generated image should be considered highly reliable as it comes from people with no specific underlying economic or political interest behind.

In fact, the change of user destination image creation through the Internet can be even deeper as the power of the different agents on the Internet seems to become diluted. Since the appearance of the Internet, centralized control over destination information dissemination is almost impossible (Choi et al., 2007; Krizman & Belullo, 2007). “Therefore, it is necessary to research and redefine the role of Internet and other information agents in shaping destination image” (Krizman & Belullo, 2007). The fact is that a marketing organization with a healthy budget, an article in an online magazine, a travel agency and an individual user or a web 2.0 device such as a blog, seem to be potentially at the same level of information transmission. This may be problematic regarding the issue of “what” is transmitted online, for, as Krizman and Belullo (2007) explain reading through the work of Govers and Go (2003), in the pre-Internet era, destination marketing organizations were “effective and influential in media content placement and in coordination of destination positioning initiative”, that is, in projecting certain targeted images about the destination. However, today, with the Internet, destinations seem incapable of controlling image projection.

Akehurst (2008) goes further and explains that through the Internet consumers are empowered and that the supply side loses weight. “Since the Internet arrived, DMOs influence and dominance has diminished” (Choi et al. 2007). As O’Connor (2010) explains, the role of users in how to display and consume information becomes dominant and it is increasingly difficult for marketers to craft and position sales messages in front of the consumers. What is surprising is that in online image projection consumers/users, as image-projecting agents, achieve a predominant role. As seen previously, Web 2.0 harnesses the empowerment of people and the “wisdom of crowds” (see section 1.3.4.1.2). Now the influence a certain agent can exert on tourists does not depend on budget but rather on site attractiveness and trustworthiness.

In addition to that, it is possible that some active-conscious role within the power struggles is taken by users-tourists: users (both transmitters and receivers of information) create a world of communication as a world apart, formed by this “collective knowledge” or “collective intelligence”, which may have its roots in the DIY philosophy (see section 1.3.4.1.2). Indeed, one of the characteristics of web 2.0 is the empowerment of people in many senses. This communication world made of users and for users can be seen as a defence from the traditional marketing, advertising or even mass media manipulation of information. Other tourists’ opinions are now considered credible by many and users seem increasingly keener to listen to other users and to post information for their peers, thus contributing to such collective information. Therefore the efforts of multiple agents to influence *what* is said in web 2.0 will most probably be greater and greater. Hence, we can foresee a new panorama of power struggles in image projection arising: the struggle between users and agents.

However, Web 2.0 may also be an opportunity for traditional agents or media which “will have to evolve as UGC gets more and more accepted”, not just to create more value but also for the traditional media to survive (Clever et al., 2009).

1.3.5. User-generated image vs. official image

As has been mentioned, today it is of the utmost importance for destinations to know what their online image is, especially the image generated by users, as tourist image has the

power to affect the destination itself, its cultural identity, its inhabitants, etc. As has already been seen, destinations are represented in multiple ways by the different agents. Destinations face several challenges among which some are identity issues: some destinations, and their inhabitants, have a socially constructed identity and image of themselves, which does not correspond to the image identity projected by agents and is sometimes contradictory or harmful for the local culture.

In this respect, we have explained that in some cases, destination tourism organizations project images closer to those of the inhabitants. At least, official image is how destinations represent themselves, and just for that reason, official image has the advantage of representing certain values and interests on socio-cultural and historical elements of the destination, and may also, to some extent, represent the will of the local population.

Besides, we have seen that with the explosion of UGC content online, destinations are being represented by users in ways still widely unknown. What is being said about us in UGC or how online users image us become fundamental questions to pose. This importance is seen in the fact that there is far more information online for tourists in the form of e-WOM than offline. Park et al. (2007) found that the purchasing intentions of consumers augmented in accordance with the number of reviews indicating that a product or service was popular (as cited in Burgess et al., 2009). In this respect, it is very important to know what is being said or what image is present about a destination online and how popular it is, for e-WOM may determine destination choice and decision-making, not to mention image formation. "All travel operators and tourism organisations involved in the marketing of destinations and products need to be, at the very least, monitoring what is being said about their respective areas on the prominent UGC sites noted in this report" (Cox et al., 2008a).

It is very interesting to see how representative dissonance applies to online image. Usually destinations want to have a coherent image online and want tourists to perceive them in a specific way. We are especially interested in the representative dissonance that may occur between the official image of destinations and the user-generated image online. There are signs to think that both images are dissimilar in many aspects which should be explored in order to adopt the adequate policies and understand how tourists see destinations. We should not just ask *how* are we being represented online by users, but also: does the online image transmitted by users *correspond* to the one we are projecting (and that we intend tourists to perceive)?

1.3.5.1. Devices within web 2.0

Once the importance of studying tourist perceived and projected images online has been explained, especially through web 2.0 and UGC in the case of tourists, in this section we will explore different 2.0 platforms which could be targeted for image analysis.

Web 2.0 includes various new technologies and elements: Mash-ups, Wikis, Podcasting, media and content syndication (RSS-feeds), Tagging, blogs and online videos (vlogs) (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Anderson, 2008), AJAX, web forums and message boards, customer ratings and evaluation systems, virtual community games (for example Second Life) (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008), Social Software, Social Media, Collaboration, Sharing content, Social Networking, MySpace, Facebook, Social Bookmarks, YouTube, Flickr, Tag

cloud, Folksonomy (Anderson, 2008). Cox et al. (2008a,b) present a table with an adaptation of the key types of web 2.0 UGC sites:

Table 1.2.
Key types of Web 2.0 UGC sites

Type of Web 2.0	Definition
Blogs (Weblogs)	Web pages that contain newsgroup-type entries, involving text, images and links to other 'blogs' in a chronological order with the newest posting listed first
Wikis	Websites that allow the user to easily add, remove, edit and/or change their content to suit their individual preferences
Podcasts	The blogging of audio content (i.e. MP3 format) which is accessed on a user-demand basis
Social Networks	Spaces on the Internet, such as MySpace and YouTube, that allow a group of friends, peers or like minded individuals to communicate, chat and share information on topics of interest. These may be in the form of pure 'socializing' sites or alternatively sites related to special interest topics (e.g. travel).

Source: Cox et al. (2008a,b), adapted from Kolbitsch & Maurer (2006) & Reactive (2007)

Some of these elements are services offered by web 2.0 to users. These are blogs, wikis, podcasting, social bookmarking, multi-media sharing (YouTube, Flickr), social networks (MySpace, Facebook, Ning) (Anderson, 2008). As explained by Fotis et al. (2012), Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) study proposed a taxonomy scheme that classifies social media types according to their (a) level of social presence/media richness, and (b) level of self-presentation/self-disclosure, identifying six types of social media: social networking websites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn), blogs, content communities (i.e. YouTube, Flickr, Scrib, Slideshare, Delicious), collaborative projects (i.e. Wikipedia, Wikitravel), virtual social worlds (i.e. Second Life), and virtual game worlds (i.e. World of Warcraft). However, as Fotis et al. (2012) comment, such taxonomy should be completed with other types of social media such as microblogs (i.e. Twitter), consumer review and rating websites (i.e. TripAdvisor, Epinions) and Internet fora (i.e. ThornTree, Fodor's Travel Talk).

Web 2.0 sites and devices in relation to travel and tourism take various forms: "these range from generic social networking sites such as MySpace.com which contain travel sections through to individual blogs that have been created by avid travellers to showcase destination reviews globally", "while the most prominent sites appear to be the popular travel sites such as Trip Advisor and Lonely Planet, the number of UGC sites being used by travellers is large" (Cox et al., 2008a).

Remarkably, it seems that users who search for tourism-related UGC do so more on specialized travel and tourism sites and these sites are the ones most likely to influence them. As Cox et al. (2008a) note, in the case of tourism of particular interest is "the relatively lower reliance on social networking sites such as MySpace, YouTube and Flickr". The authors found that "while some 45% of study participants had used these sites, many did not consider them particularly useful compared to specialist travel site". Moreover, "comments made by people on pure blogs which aren't specialist travel sites, are not trusted by most people". For example, in this sense, specialized travel blog and review hosting websites could be a good target for tourists searching for UGC if compared to individual blogs and a source with high potential of influence on tourists.

Cox et al. (2008a) make a list of popular travel-related web 2.0 sites and classify them according to whether they are commercial (with 5 star ratings or no ratings) or not.

Table 1.3.
Popular travel-related Web 2.0 sites

COMMERCIAL SITES – 5 STAR RATINGS	COMMERCIAL SITES – NO RATINGS
Trip Advisor (www.tripadvisor.com) Epic Trip (www.epictrip.com) IgoUgo (www.igougo.com) Lonely Planet's Bluelist (www.lonelyplanet.com/bluelist) Orbitz (www.orbitzinsider.com) Mapsack (www.mapsack.com) Virtual Tourist (www.virtualtourist.com) Trip Up (www.tripup.com) Travelocity (www.travelocity.com) Expedia (www.expedia.com/destinations) Yahoo Travel (travel.yahoo.com) TravBuddy (www.travbuddy.com) STA Travel Blogs (www.statraveljournals.com)	Flickr Travel (www.flickr.com/travel) Gusto (www.gusto.com) Travelistic (www.travelistic.com) The Lobby (www.thelobby.com) Kayak (www.kayak.com) Visit Victoria (www.visitvictoria.com) Lonely Planet TV (www.lonelyplanet.tv) Schmap (www.schmap.com) Trip Hub (www.triphub.com) Del.icio.us (www.del.icio.us.com)
NON-COMMERCIAL SITES	
This Place I Know (www.thisplaceiknow.com) Wikitravel (www.wikitravel.com) Travel Blog (www.travelblog.com) Travel Rants (www.travelrants.com) Trips Log (www.tripslog.com) YouTube Travel (www.youtube.com/travel) V Carious (www.vcarious.com) World 66 (www.world66.com)	

Source: Cox et al. (2008a)

Among these travel 2.0 websites, Cox et al. (2008b) “found two major types of UGC comments being made: those through a general ‘blog’ (which were more common overall) and those made via reviews of particular travel products (which were more common in commercial 5 star websites)”. Within travel 2.0 websites González’s (2010) report outlines the importance of analysing travel forums and blogs to see what is being “said” and “talked” about a destination online by users. The report stresses the importance of analysing both the volume of conversations that are being generated around the destinations and tourist brands, and which are the themes or subject matters of these online conversations (as a reflection of their interests and motivations). According to the report, devices such as blogs seem to contain more post-trip information (people explain their tourist experience) whilst devices such as travel forums contain more pre-trip information (as people ask questions about future trips).

Among the different tourist UGC platforms, **travel blogs and reviews** are very interesting and appropriate 2.0 tourism devices to study perceived-transmitted image of tourists about a specific destination. They are appropriate because their content is located mostly in sites with a non-commercial or not directly commercial interest. Cox et al. (2008a) explain that UGC sites can be divided into commercial and non-commercial sites. Although UGC and e-WOM are related to non-commercial intentions, such UGC spaces or devices can be located in websites with direct commercial purposes towards users. Travel blogs are found to be the

most widely used type of UGC for non-commercial purposes (Cox et al., 2008a). We believe that information within websites with no direct commercial purpose towards users (as we acknowledge their income may come from advertising or other sources) is better to analyse tourist images given that the information is probably less biased by commercial interference of the site managers and also because users, when writing on non-commercial sites, know about this and go there only for the purpose of writing and reading blogs. It is these non-commercial UGC sites, such as travel blogs, that have “community features, such as the ability to set up a group of friends online via the website” (Cox et al., 2008a).

Moreover comments related to destinations in general, not just to specific products, seem to be much more common in non-commercial websites such as blogs (Cox et al. 2008a). The results of Cox et al. (2008a) show that in non-commercial websites, especially in travel-related blogs, where comments of website managers are less present, most comments of users are posted to “express their opinions” and emotions. If we target what tourists think, it must be in sites where tourists express themselves freely such as travel blogs. “It might equally be expected that the types of websites that had a higher proportion of comments where contributors ‘think by writing’ would be sites that have predominantly user-generated comments. This is in fact the case, with the websites with the four highest proportions of ‘think by writing’ comments all being predominantly UGC Blog websites” (Cox et al., 2008a).

The results of Cox et al. (2008a) on several UGC tourism-related sites showed that comments on travel 2.0 sites were related to accommodation (53%), then attractions (20%), followed by destinations (13%), then transport (4%) and other subjects (10%). In the case of travel blogs, the comments could be expected to be mostly about destinations and attractions and in the case of certain travel reviews, the attractions could be expected to be their major content. Although, among travel-related UGC, travel blogs describing destinations may not be the most widely used by users, as these seem to be the sites dedicated to accommodation assessment (Cox et al. 2008a), travel blogs are platforms containing a more in-depth and wider image of a destination, its attractions (not only accommodation or transport reviews) and the tourism experience itself. In addition, some travel reviews referring to sites and attractions contain similar information about destinations and their attractions, and are also valuable.

As seen previously in section 1.3.2.2., it is important to consider the reach or potential dissemination information has among users. Who is reading or seeing the information is a fundamental indicator of the potential dissemination this information will have and its potential influence. In this respect, not all UGC sites have the same amount of public nor the same type of reader. Travel blogs and reviews accomplish two important features in this sense: first, people who read them and participate are usually interested in travelling and may be specialized in this subject. Second, “due to the increasing amount and the characteristics of blogs or social media sites in general (e.g. regular updates, including numerous links), these websites are ranked highly by search engines such as Google and Yahoo! Since a majority of users use search engines to search for information, they guide users directly to social media sites” (Stangl, 2010). Therefore, numerous traveller segments use them and even if users are still not familiar with social media related to travel, they will probably use them in the future because the sites are listed on top of the result pages of search engines. They have the potential to reach and be used by a wide public.

1.3.5.2. Travel blogs

In this section travel blogs are explained in their multiple aspects and characteristics. The place of travel blogs within the context of online image construction and their nature as places both for perceived and projected images will be explained.

1.3.5.2.1. Blogs expansion, characteristics and aspects

Blog is a shortened word which originated from the term “web log”, log referring to a log or diary published on the Internet. They have been in existence since 1997 (Akehurst, 2008) or probably in similar forms after 1995. Blogs in general and travel blogs belong to the so-called Web 2.0 (O’Reilly, 2005; Orihuela, 2006; Macías, 2007; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Anderson, 2008), and specifically travel blogs belong to the “Travel 2.0” concept (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). They are self-produced materials containing User-Generated Content (UGC).

Blogs can be broadly defined as dynamic websites, the content of which is organized by posts following an inverse or reverse chronological order (Herring, 2004; Tejedor, 2008; Bosangit et al. 2009). They have the characteristic to incorporate multimedia information. An important structural feature of blogs is that all pages have their own URL address and, therefore, admit groupings by categories (Macías, 2007). Different definitions are given to the word “blog” or “weblog”: The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines it as “a personal website on which an individual records opinions, links to other sites, etc. on a regular basis”. Similarly, Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines it as “a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer”. Indeed, “blogs are an amalgam between a diary, a web site, and an online community” (Embrey, 2002 as cited in Jones & Alony, 2008).

There are different types of blogs according to who the **interacting agents** are. Blogs are usually controlled by a single person, although collective blogs exist, as shown by the existence of group blogs such as “family blogs, community blogs, and corporate blogs” (Jones & Alony, 2008). The blogosphere in general, and the blogs on tourism, do not solely contain blogs as a form of consumer to consumer (C2C) communication. In addition, multiple communicative scenarios occur: business to business (B2B) blogs, business to consumer (B2C) blogs or government to consumer (G2C) blogs (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Specifically concerning travel blogs and Travel 2.0 in the blogosphere, Filgueira (2008) makes a classification similar to that of Schmallegger and Carson (2008). Filgueira (2008) classifies blogs according to whether they are corporative, dependent on institutions and businesses, user blogs or blogs with special formats (videos, images, sound) or other 2.0 tools. Regarding user blogs, they can be travel journals, personal diaries, blogs on destinations or places, opinion blogs, news blogs, travel community blogs. According to the type of blog they are and to their **function as Internet devices**, the five key functions of the Internet (promotion, product distribution, communication, management and research) mentioned by Schmallegger and Carson (2008) apply differently. Blogs can serve as promotional marketing spaces, surfaces enabling product distribution, as tools for (peer-to-peer) communication, as strategic management devices, or as information research sources

Despite this variety of blogs depending on the agents communicating, we maintain that the best blogs to view tourists' destination images are the C2C or user type containing UGC. These user-to-user (tourist-to-tourist) blogs are the most suitable ones to focus on the tourists' perspective and to study the image they perceive and transmit; the best way to see the representations of users is in a user *milieu*. They are the ones which entail the so-called **word-of-mouth** communication effect. The fact that in this type of peer-to-peer communication there is no underlying economic interest is the only way to ensure that the information given is as genuine and representative of their perception as possible.

Chen, Yung and Wang (2008) explain Lin's (2004) summary of the main user-to-user or C2C blog characteristics: they (1) revolve around authors: articles are written from an authors' subjective point of view. (2) Emphasize content: authors attach importance to data gathering, integrating, and article presentation. (3) Interaction: authors write down experiences and spread the news. Interactions exist between authors and browsers by means of linkage and replies. (4) Life attitude: a blog is not only a name of some software or a system, but provides users with the right to speak, the chance for introspection, and share information with others. Finally, blogs cultivate positive social coherence.

Indeed, **User-Generated Content** is one of the most outstanding characteristics of blogs or the so-called "participative web" (Clever et al. 2009) (see section 1.3.4.1.1.). Schmallegger and Carson (2008) point out that what is different about blog-type sites is that their content is relatively unstructured and not managed by any host organization but directly generated by users. They are usually informally written (Macías, 2007) and, in the case of blogs, are shaped in a diary format (O'Reilly, 2005). These contents are created in a dynamic process "sustained by human action and interest" (Lin, Sundaram, Tatemura & Tseng, 2006). "Blogs enable, in their writers, a freedom of expression which may not be as readily available in other media" and "cover a wide range of subject areas, both serious and fun, and attract an eclectic array of readers" (Hull, 2007 as explained in Jones & Alony, 2008). They constitute new open spaces for collaboration (Macías, 2007) and interaction (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008).

The fact that the content of these objects is integrally produced by users, in an amateurish style, provides a hand full of new opportunities for human and social science studies, and is perhaps the most precious characteristic of blogs when studying tourists' perceptions. The blogosphere has become the new "wisdom of crowds" (Anderson, 2008; Gruber, 2007), and such wisdom needs to be explored. The point to which users share these contents is another issue to study. As Ochoa and Duval's (as cited in Clever et al., 2009) quantitative analysis of UGC on Amazon.com showed, the rule-of-thumb (called 'Participation Inequality'), according to which 10% of users produce 90% of the content, did not work for sites such as Amazon.com where 10% of users produced 50% of contents. Research should be done in order to see what the participation inequality rate is in the case of travel blog and review hosting websites.

The **temporal** aspect of blogs is also relevant. They are spaces of dialectic nature and constant feedback that are frequently modified and information frequently updated (Macías, 2007; Herring, 2004). According to Lin et al. (2006) blogs differ from regular web sites in four different aspects: temporal dynamics, event locality, link semantics and community centrality. The differential way to relate to time and context/events is particularly interesting. "A blog differs in a fundamental way from regular web pages due to

its temporal nature” (Lin et al. 2006). Blogs are temporally very dynamic due to their ease of editability by both the creator and the readers; furthermore, the entries are time sensitive, which means they are related to event locality and temporal context (Lin et al., 2006). Moreover communication can be atemporal there.

What makes blogs so special and interesting is also their new way of functioning and the vast new communication and interaction possibilities they provide. They are part of the so-called Social Web where “value is created by the aggregation of many individual user contributions” and belong to the collective intelligence (Gruber, 2007). This new interactive way of functioning leads to the creation of **virtual social networks or communities** which are of major interest. Pan et al. (2007) and Lin et al. (2006) ascertain that different communities arise in the blogosphere. These are “groups of individuals who share a common interest” (Casaló, 2009). Building on the works of others, Casaló (2009) defines online communities as a “group of individuals, with a common interest which pushes them to interact, who communicate in the cyberspace through electronic systems, who maintain stable relationships in time and follow certain rules guiding such relationships”.

Kumar et al. (2004) as cited in Pan et al. (2007) demonstrated that the blogspace consists of at least three layers: the individual bloggers who are defined by their demographic characteristics, a middle layer of pairs of bloggers constructed on the basis of friendship, and a third, higher layer of interest groups and virtual communities explained by geographic or demographic correlations. “Blogspace can also create virtual relationships and communities, and its influence moves far beyond the readers of the blogs, creating a new type of reality through search engines in the online space that practitioners should be aware of” (Pan et al., 2007). Blogs are a type of virtual spaces that are particularly gifted for engaging the people, favouring interaction and relationships grounded on common interests and topics. They are community-centric (Lin et al. 2006) and contribute importantly to virtual communities but they are not the only ones by far, as spaces such as YouTube, forums or Second life among many others also enable people to share their experiences around the globe (Waldhör, 2007).

Online communities seem to be different to traditional social networks or communities in many senses: in online social communities the physical location of the user is not important, participation costs are lower, there are not as many time restrictions, resulting in longer-lasting conversations, communication is usually written, there is a major democratization of information, and greater numbers of participants (Casaló, 2009). The structure of the blog community emerges through the bloggers’ behaviour, through their way of communicating and interacting. Lin et al. (2006) emphasize how easy and quick it is to publish content, interact, and send direct and indirect feedback in weblogs by means of comment and trackback facilities leading to the formation of groups of communities interested in certain contents. As Vrana and Zafiroopoulos (2010) draw from several studies, blogging tools enable between-blog interactivity and thus, networks and relationships in the world of blogs are built.

Indeed, a “blog community is based on mutual awareness amongst bloggers, which is only present as a result of bi-directional communication”; “the blogger becomes both the *producer* of content (author of her own blog) as well as the *consumer* who reads other blogs and web pages” (Lin et al 2006). Mutual awareness of individual blogger action is critical to

community formation. These actions can be to a) surf/read (the only action which is not observable or hidden), b) create entries, c) comment, d) change blogroll (Lin et al., 2006).

It seems travel blogs, and especially bloggers within travel blog hosting websites, can potentially form virtual communities. "Virtual tourist communities, where tourists can exchange opinions and experiences on topics of common interest, have been around at least since the late 1990s" (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Online tourism forums and other virtual communities also allow free expression and sharing of information, perceptions and opinions. As a result, centralized control over destination information dissemination is now almost impossible (Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Choi et al., 2007). However, Vrana, Zafiroopoulos and Karystinaïou (2009) emphasize that some travel blog hosting websites (such as travelpod.com) cannot be considered virtual communities because of their low interactivity among users. For these authors, they are just a comfortable space dedicated to a common interest. Although travel blog sites have the potential to become virtual communities, further studies should address the interactivity issue to determine the degree to which virtual communities are actually formed.

The creation and use of blogs is **rapidly expanding** becoming this "push-button publishing for the people" more popular every day (www.blogger.com), probably due to the ease of use of these new devices compared to traditional web pages that allows users to concentrate on content rather than structure (Orihuela, 2006). "Blogs have become an important form of emotional and informational release for a growing proportion of the population" (Jones & Alony, 2008). Furthermore, they facilitate the search for information, through search criteria. Jones and Alony (2008) gathered some factors contributing to the proliferation of blogs. These are: firstly, their increasing accessibility and ubiquity which enables people to publish their opinions and thoughts. Secondly, the increasing availability and malleability of software and its ease of use (practically no technical skills are required to create a blog) which makes entry barriers really low. Thirdly, the general public is increasingly accepting the use of blogs for communicating and searching for information. The Technorati yearly Reports "State of the blogosphere" also confirm that blogging is a rapidly expanding global phenomenon. "It is also expected that with the growth of technologically-native population, blogs will become as common and ubiquitous as the mobile phone" (Jones & Alony, 2008). Many authors explain and gather such an expansion of blogs in recent years (among them Pan et al., 2007; Filgueira, 2008; Jones & Alony, 2008; Bosangit et al., 2009; Marine-Roig, 2010). Jones and Alony (2008), also presented a graphic compilation from different sources, which shows that blogs have been growing exponentially from the beginning. According to the authors' graphic, blogs experienced a logarithmic growth from 1999 to 2007. Figure 1.7 shows blog expansion in recent years. As can be seen below, the numbers speak for themselves.

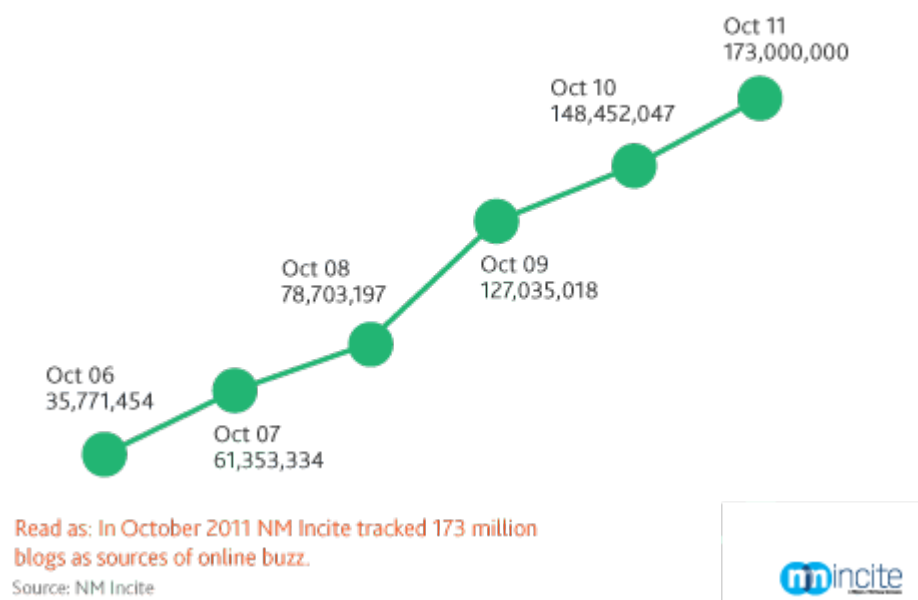
This surprising tendency seems to be occurring in tourism too. Among the eighteen topics tracked by Technorati.com ("State of the blogosphere report"), "travel" was placed in 9th position, which is the equivalent of 28% of the total blogs monitored by the site (Bosangit et al., 2009). In 2011, travel was among the top 30 tags in 19th position (Technorati report, 2011). Sites like Travelblog.org have more than 100,000 members, with a daily increase of 100 new members, and containing over 400,000 blog entries, 50,000 maps and 3 million photos (Law, 2009). Travbuddy.com hosts 1.2 million travbuddies (Bosangit et al., 2009). Even if the total number of blogs devoted to travel experiences seems really difficult to estimate, there is no doubt that their number is growing and their use is spreading rapidly

(Bosangit & Mena, 2009). For Carson (2008) “it is clear that blogs will continue to grow in popularity both as a medium for telling people about trips and as a source of information for potential travellers”.

Figure 1.7.

Blog expansion in recent years (millions)

Number of Blogs Tracked by NM Incite



Source: NM Incite, nielsen.com (2012)

Although the reach of travel blogs might still be limited, they are achieving an increasingly massive audience and it is incontestable that they will continue expanding and that their audience will be increasingly wide. Travel blog hosting websites have very important numbers of posts and members and continue to grow rapidly. Data we collected from the websites at 2010-12-01 corroborates this tendency: TravBuddy.com hosts 1,646,268 TravBuddies that are sharing 158,794 travel blogs, 54,983 travel reviews and 3,252,115 photos. TravelBlog.org has over 150,000 members and is growing at a rate of around 100 new members a day (last updated January 2010). TravellersPoint.com has a total of 344,123 members from 244 countries. In TravelPod.com, bloggers from 186 countries shared 82,758 travel experiences this week. VirtualTourist.com claims to have 1 million members from around the world.

Who is blogging is still difficult to tell nowadays. Jones and Alony (2008), assume that bloggers will be people familiar with new technologies, who like writing in general and online. They assume that older groups of population and people from developing or poor countries would be underrepresented among them. Carson (2008) gathers that Internet used for personal reasons is most popular among teenagers and young adults, although the authors point out emergent segments of retired people and young families using it (Carson, 2008) which could correspond to the travel bloggers' profiles.

Some studies which shed light on the issue of who is blogging have been published. The Perseus (2005) study (as cited in Pan et al., 2007) found that bloggers were majoritarilly female with ages ranging from 13 to over 50, but the overwhelming majority (94%) is under

the age of 30, stressing the femininity and youth of bloggers. Other studies such as Mack, Blose and Pan (2008) however, point out that the bloggers are mostly male (57%) but also young (48% under 30), broadband users, Internet veterans, higher income and well educated. Mack et al. (2008) have gathered several studies on the subject among which is the one by Rainie (2005) who found that blog readers also tend to be younger, better educated and Internet veterans, and the 2005 ComScore report, which indicates that bloggers are “disproportionately affluent, young and broadband-enabled” (as cited in Mack et al., 2008). Broillet and Dubosson (2008) mentioned that a study has shown that “76% of Americans earning more than 150,000 dollars per year is spending very regularly their time reading blogs (Mc Kinnon, 2007)” (as cited in Broillet & Dubosson 2008). The Technorati Report (2011) indicates that three fifths of bloggers are male, a proportion that holds true over all blogger types. The report states that the majority of bloggers are in the 25-44 age range and a third are over 44.

Gathering all these results, we could say that bloggers are generally young, mostly in the 25 to 40 age range, connected via broadband to Internet, with high income and are probably highly educated. It seems, depending on the studied blogger communities, that more females or males may be participating.

Unfortunately, as Akehurst (2008) notes from several studies, “there is no known published research on the type of tourist or traveller who writes blogs and what trip types and destination types are more likely to generate blog content”. Specifically concerning travel blogs, Carson (2008) points out the lack of published research on what type of traveller is likely to author blogs, or what types of trips and what types of destinations are more likely to generate blog content. In this respect, only the study of Pühringer and Taylor (2010) sheds a little light on this issue. These authors explain that travel bloggers in English blogs aged between 21 and 40 are estimated to account for around two-thirds of these.

Knowing where bloggers posting tourist images come from is also very important because images may vary according to the distance of the origin country from the destination, they may also vary depending on cultural background and nationality. Moreover, it is important to know if the blogger’s origins are similar to the real tourist public coming to the destination.

1.3.5.2.2. What are travel blogs?

This section looks specifically into travel-related blogs. “Blogs of travel experiences are called travel blogs” (Bosangit et al., 2009). Travel blogs can be defined as consumer-to-consumer or peer-to-peer “virtual settlements” (Lin et al., 2006) which host user-generated content authored by travellers, and that take the form of online personal diaries conveying travel stories and experiences, along with recommendations and product evaluations (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Bosangit et al., 2009) that anyone can access.

In these spaces, bloggers usually recount their travel stories, either during their trip (*in situ*) or after the tourist experience (*a posteriori*), but mostly when the memories are still fresh. Carson (2008) points out that tourists may talk about their expectations prior to the trip or to its achievement, although this does not seem to be the general case. It appears that most tourists write these blogs while they are still abroad in the tourist place or just after going back home, and that they describe past events of their trip, often occurring in that very

same day. According to Pühringer and Taylor (2008) “as much as 90 per cent of T-blog entries are thought to be made during the trip” and probably the rest after having had the travel experience.

Like blogs in general, travel blogs are updated frequently, posts are ordered in reverse chronological order and their nature is interactive. These virtual interactive spaces enable users to post information, such as texts, pictures and videos on their travel experiences and to add comments to one another. Authors such as Filgueira (2008) assert that their conception as multimedia publishing tools is their main characteristic. Although they contain primarily textual information, uploading audio and video files is becoming more popular (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Travel blogs are multimedia spaces combining text, images, audiovisual material, links, etc. in a space used by travellers while travelling.

Each of the blogs has its individual URL address, which enables its classification. As we study travel blogs as a user-to-user medium of communication, we generally understand them as “personal websites which are created and maintained by a single blogger” (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008), although tourist blogs created by more than one person also exist. Travel blogs can be located as individual sites on the Internet, run by one or more people, isolated from other similar pages, or instead be found along with other travel blogs in specialized hosting sites. These last travel blog hosting websites are of special interest for this research due to their great expansion and the concentration of blogs they convey in a single space (see section 2.2.1.1).

Stangl (2010) classified travel blogs into different categories according to their characteristics and uses, as seen in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4.

Description of blog categories in a travel context

K-logs	All travel blogs can be seen as knowledge blogs, thus k-logs is an umbrella term which is true for all kinds of travel blogs
Personal journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written like a diary• At most two authors are dominant
Mixed filter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collection of links concerning a specific topic• Linkage to other sites• Possibility to write comments• Some personal aspects about the authors
News	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group of authors/journalists• Only short comments are allowed by users• Hardly any/no links to other relevant sites
Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One or more authors• Tips, tricks, and experiences that facilitate travel planning
Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of restaurants, hotels, or tourism related products/services• Experiences in the form of scales• Information about prospective destinations
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on community• Special applications that facilitate getting and staying in contact with other users• Platform that comprises all other categories
Others	Blogs that are not applicable to any other category

Source: Stangl (2010)

In spite of this categorization the authors acknowledge that hybrid types can exist and that assigning a blog to a specific category is not always clear cut.

What travel blogs contain, is also a subject of high interest. These spaces contain mainly information about tourists' trips and experiences. The topics within these pages seem to relate to general themes such as climate, cuisine, transport or regional specific stereotypes (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). In this sense, personal travel blog diaries are eminently descriptive (providing information on the destination, attractions or activities) moreso than other blogs related to travel found in forums, travel communities or review sites which are usually more evaluative (Waldhör, 2007) (although, as we shall see in section 1.3.5.3, some travel reviews are descriptive, similarly to T-blogs). To study the perceived and transmitted image of a destination, a broad and descriptive view of it and of the tourism experience becomes necessary, and therefore travel blogs in the form of travel diaries become very good candidates for these types of research. This type of travel blogs contain mainly the account in first person of the tourism experience. This phenomenon in tourism is not new, as "narratives and stories about tourism experiences have always been popular" (Volo, 2010a), blogs have been a new means for its expression and sharing.

Some authors stress the rich narratives and detailed accounts of experiences they contain (Bosangit et al., 2009). Indeed, textual information is especially relevant and rich in travel blogs. "Researchers in the fields of consumer psychology, marketing and sociology have paid increasing attention to the value of narrative and storytelling in communicating people's experiences" (Volo, 2010a), as narration is "a device for interpreting human experience" (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2008). Tourism institutions and marketers too are paying increasing attention to the content of travel blogs, as "expressions of tourism consumption" because of the wealth of information they contain and their potential to inform research into tourism consumption (Bosangit et al., 2009). "Travel blogs are treated as records of tourist consumption that may provide insights to the motivation, meanings and behaviour of tourists and as a word-of-mouth-communication that should receive attention from the industry due to their wide audience" (Bosangit & Mena, 2009).

However, Akehurst (2008) makes a criticism of travel blog content utility, emphasizing that its value is not guaranteed as it often reflects the "incoherent, unstructured and random ramblings of individuals, which in another age might have been confined to the relative obscurity of a written diary". Such a hazardous structure might be solved in future online travel blog spaces by creating collective knowledge systems for travel (see Gruber, 2007).

However it may be, travel blogs have opened new paths for travel narratives to spring up and spread, and this phenomenon deserves special attention. "Tourism blogs are providing a new way of sharing tourist experiences with an international audience" (Sharda & Ponnada, 2008). Blogs allow travellers to disseminate and search "vast amounts of information quickly, seeking out the factual, the real and the truth" (Pudliner, 2007 as cited in Volo, 2010a). Anyone, anywhere can consult and express his or her ideas about a tourist destination and share them with the rest of the world through blogs, opening the door to others to contribute with new information giving rise to a collaborative platform of knowledge sharing and creation in the form of a social network (Filgueira, 2008). Indeed, one of the main characteristics of travel blogs is their function as new word-of-mouth

communication spaces concerning travel and tourism. No matter how representative bloggers are of the tourist public of a destination, their posts become the visible user-generated image of that place online, thus deserving a precise study.

1.3.5.2.3. Motivations and reasons to blog

The motivations to blog and travel blog can be researched in the general roots of the phenomenon of human needs (Casaló, 2009). As Casaló explains, from the general perspective of travel blogs as online social networks, belonging to a community (online) allows the individual to fulfil emotional needs and to answer transcendental questions.

Furthermore, bloggers may be keen to participate in blogs because their physical location is irrelevant, the degree of participation and identity revelation is chosen by the subject, the access to information is more democratized, and the costs of participating in virtual networks are lower, both in economic and individual effort terms than in offline communities (Casaló, 2009). In the same vein, Schmallegger and Carson (2008) point out several advantages of blogs for users over other forms of content, even web-based content: “they are relatively easily updated, relatively flexible in structure, encourage interaction between authors and readers, and allow people to participate in information exchange who might not otherwise have the opportunity” (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Bar-Ilan’s survey also pointed out that personal information and self-expression are becoming important aspects in blogs (as cited in Lin & Huang, 2006). “Travelers use travel blogs mainly to get ideas (63.7%) and to narrow down choices (64.7%) before they make a travel decision” (Gretzel and Park, 2007 as cited in Stangl, 2009).

Cox et al. (2008a) summarize the advantages of UGC for assisting travellers by adapting a model from Gretzel (2007). They:

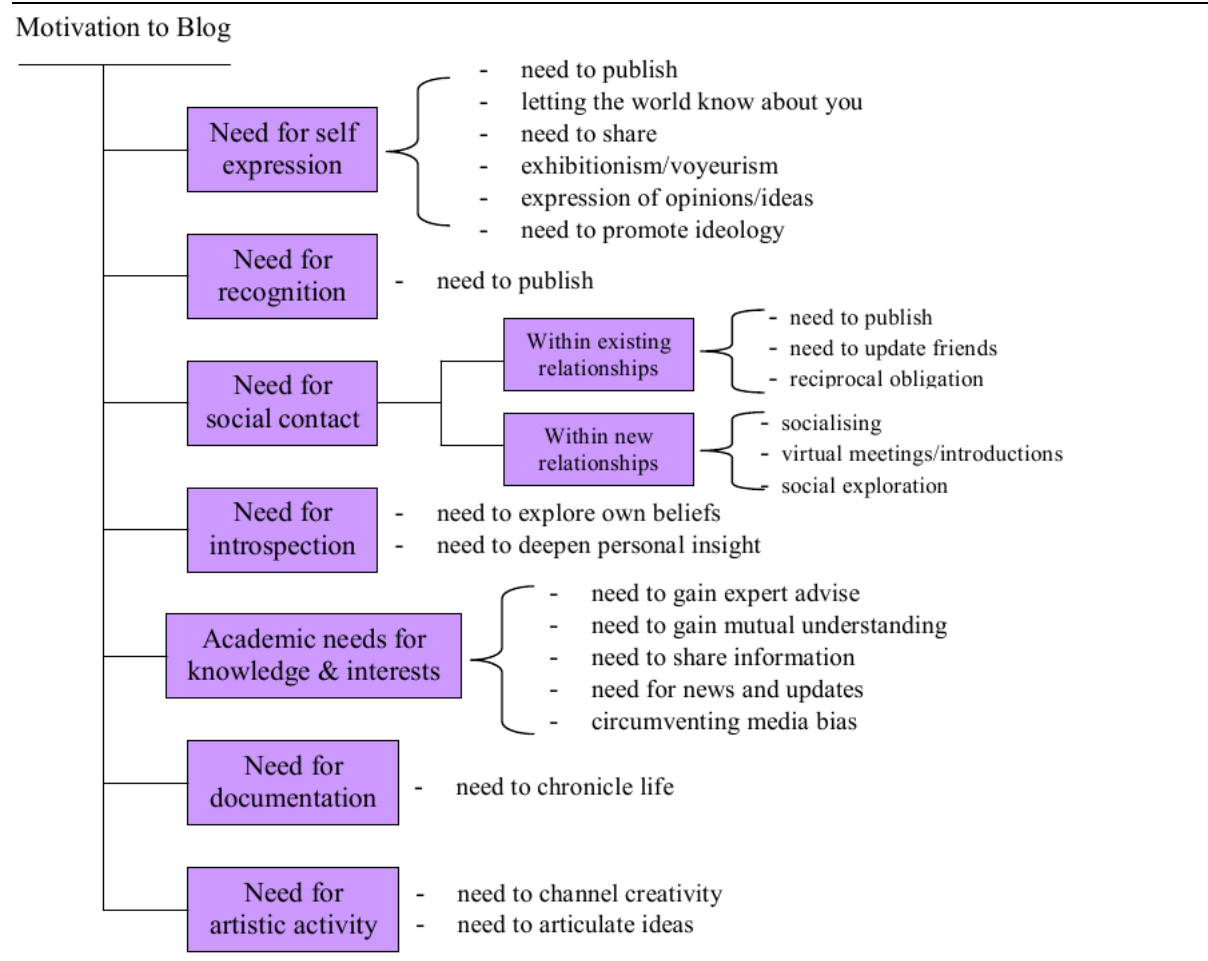
- Help them learn about a destination and what it has to offer
- Help them to evaluate alternatives and avoid places they would not enjoy
- Provide them with ideas (on what to see and do while they are on-site)
- Increase their confidence about the travel decisions they make
- Make it easier to ‘imagine what a place will be like’
- Reduce the risk and uncertainty associated with travel planning
- Facilitate easier decision making related to travel
- Improve efficiency when planning travel

Cox et al. (2008b) explain that Shang et al. (2007) suggested people create blogs in order to: a) update others on activities (actual events or activities that have occurred or are about to occur). b) Express opinions to influence others. The difference between this and ‘updating others’ is that these are opinions, not necessarily facts, c) to seek others’ opinions and feedback, d) to think by writing and e) to release emotional tension.

Jones and Alony (2008) make a very concise outline of motivations-needs that incite publishing blogs in general. They found seven needs: (1) self-expression, (2) recognition, (3) social contact, (4) introspection, (5) academic needs for knowledge and interests, (6) need for documentation, and (7) need for artistic activity (see Figure 1.8). One of the most important needs satisfied by blogging is the need for social contact. Many bloggers end up

meeting face-to-face or going to blogosphere group events which are reflected upon in the blogs (Jones & Alony, 2008).

Figure 1.8.
 The various schema of motivation to blog

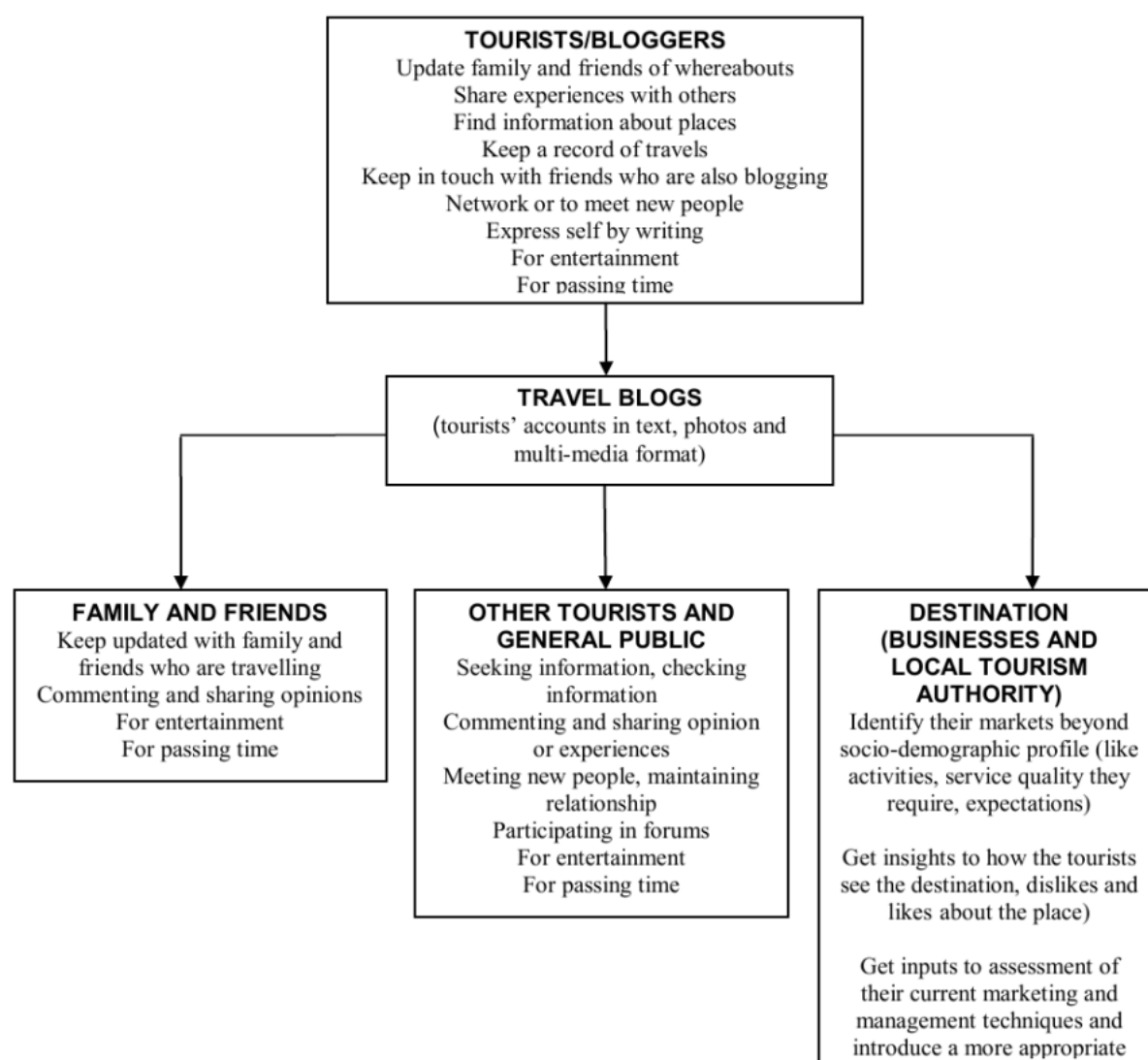


Source: Jones & Alony (2008)

Specifically for travel blogging, the reasons or motivations to create them are multiple, however, it seems that they are mainly used to write about activities and travel experiences online and to keep in contact with and inform family and friends (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Pühringer & Taylor, 2010). Bosangit and Mena (2009) summarize very accurately the main motivations and benefits for tourists who create travel blogs: 1. Update family and friends of whereabouts, 2. Share experiences with others, 3. Find information about places, 4. Keep a record of travels, 5. Keep in touch with friends who are also blogging, 6. Network or meet new people, 7. Express self by writing, 8. Entertainment, 9. For passing time. The motivations for travel blogging therefore range from more transcendental reasons, such as self-expression and socializing, to more trivial reasons, such as updating family and friends and passing time.

Figure 1.9

The value of travel blogs to their audience



Source: Bosangit and Mena (2009)

1.3.5.2.4. Previous studies on travel blogs

Blogs have recently started to become an object of research study in the last decade but especially in the last 5-8 years, coinciding with their vast expansion. "To date, the blogging phenomenon has rich literature examining multiple functions of blogging such as social networking, knowledge/information sharing, life-documenting, communication and identity construction" (Pan et al., 2007). Destination marketing organizations are also seeing the possible uses of Travel blog analysis. According to Pühringer and Taylor (2008) these uses are: identifying and monitoring trends in traveller movements to and from the destination, specific product evaluations and reviews, event evaluations, identification of product or infrastructure gaps, performance reviews of associated products or collaborators, competitor analysis.

The fields of research with travel blogs are vast. In the tourism area, some authors have related the content of blogs with the geography of destinations and have spatially and temporally tracked tourist behaviour patterns in an urban milieu especially regarding tourist

experiences, activities and impressions of specific locations (Kurashima, Tezuka & Tanaka, 2005, 2006). Karlsson (2006) analysed the issues of identification and belonging in tales of diasporic tourists through discourse analysis in diary weblogs. Others have analysed the differential space consumption of the local population compared to foreigners' consumption (Mena & Bosangit, 2007). Lin et al. (2006), demonstrated how these virtual blogging communities form by means of their mutual awareness and interaction. Also focusing on virtual communities, Dippelreiter et al. (2008) presented an overview of the state of online tourism communities in terms of their technological features and the adoption of Web 2.0 technology.

Pan et al. (2007) showed the strengths and weaknesses of a destination (Charleston, South Carolina) through the analysis of travel blogs. Other authors have studied travel blog genres in order to categorize them (Stangl, 2010). Stangl (2010) contributed to the discussion on motivational differences of users based on differential genre of users or user groups, (for example they discriminate users according to their sensation-seeking level). Banyai and Glover (2011) evaluated research methods on Travel Blogs. Other studies cited in Banyai and Glover (2011) are "Enoch's and Grossman's (2010) interpretive analysis of blogs written by backpackers from Israel and Denmark examined how people of different nationalities interact with the Indian culture, and identified the unique characteristics related to the blog and the bloggers' identities".

Bosangit et al. (2009) observed that research on travel blogs has been focused on the search for behavioural patterns and destination descriptions and therefore studied these objects in themselves, as consumer narrative objects with specific patterns and linguistic structure. They demonstrated the potential of travel blogs for consumer narrative analysis, with insights into concepts such as identity and sense-making.

Some authors have analysed travel blogs specifically in relation to tourist image. Concerning projected image, Lin and Huang (2006) showed how the personal storytelling of tourists can actually create and project tourist image and promote destinations. Regarding the study of Lin and Huang (2006), Cox et al. (2008a) comment that "the results do suggest that pure blog sites have the potential to positively enhance the destination marketing activities of a particular country or region". In respect of perceived image, Pan et al. (2007) analysed visitors' opinions within travel blogs to understand the manifested experience at destinations. Wenger (2008) analysed travel blog contents and hence gained valuable insights into destination image. Mariné-Roig (2010) studied travel blogs as suitable objects for perceived tourist image research.

All these studies, among many others, show the great versatility of the use of "travel blogs" and their importance for tourism understanding and planning.

1.3.5.2.5. Travel blogs as objects for perceived image research

Many authors acknowledge the importance of travel blogs as rich and meaningful data sources giving insights into the tourism phenomenon and especially into tourists' perceptions, thoughts and opinions, having a great potential for researchers, managers, marketers, etc. (Kurashima et al., 2005, 2006; Mena & Bosangit, 2007; Pan et al., 2007; Pühringer & Taylor, 2008; Wenger, 2008; Jones & Alony, 2008; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al., 2009; Carson, 2008; Mariné-Roig, 2010; Banyai & Glover, 2011). "Blogs provide an insider view of what bloggers feel and think about various social issues. This

content is useful as primary data for publication or used for comparison with other sources, either other blog sites or other empirical data” (Jones & Alony, 2008). As the authors explain, bloggers discuss in detail many relevant aspects and therefore have a great potential for social research to use them as an empirical source “only limited by the time taken to collect and analyse the data” (Jones & Alony, 2008). Online travel stories or narratives reveal what differentiates one experience from another (Banyai & Glover, 2011), provide insights into tourists’ self-perceptions (Bosangit et al., 2009) and show how tourists make meaning and order of their experiences (Bosangit et al., 2009; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Banyai & Glover, 2011).

By analysing blogs, motivations, meanings and behaviour can be tracked (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). Schmallegger and Carson (2008) stress that researchers (such as Wenger 2008, Pan et al., 2007 or Choi et al., 2007) have found analysing blogs is a promising way to assess the image of a destination among a particular traveller group which is otherwise hard to reach, or to reveal potential strengths and weaknesses of a tourist destination. As explained before, travel blogs are rich narratives or travel stories that contain detailed information on the tourists’ experiences, feelings and thoughts related to a particular place. Travel blogs enable the “observation of personal experiences, specific to location and time” (Lin & Huang, 2006), information that was usually unavailable. This spatial aspect of blogs, along with the fact that they are entirely created by users (User-Generated Content) makes them a key object to understand the tourist the way she or he sees things, his or her perception of the destination and its identity. Travel blogs enable “the extraction of the writers’ experiences during a specific time period. When combined with the extraction of geographic keywords (geo-coding of blogs) from the articles, tourist experiences, related to a specific place and time can be obtained” (Lin & Huang, 2006). In addition, in these travel blog hosting websites they usually ask the tourist to specify the duration and exact days of her or his trip and when they create a new blog they necessarily have to link their blogs to a specific destination. The fact that blogs are both spatially and temporally bound is particularly relevant for destination image studies since it opens the doors to the analysis of specific perceptions of place and also it would allow tracking the evolution of this image through time.

Their especially diverse multimedia content is usually ordered chronologically and usually qualitatively covers every aspect of their trip, from preparation and leaving home, transportation, the actual experience with the activities they did and their trip back home (Bosangit et al., 2009; Pan et al., 2007). They are detailed first-hand stories in an online diary form which are usually written when memories of the trip are fresh, everything is explained “in their own words” (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). These are *actual* experiences, unlike commercially prepared tourist guides or media reports (Lin & Huang, 2006). Their content is therefore an expression of the perceived image and identity of the destination; it reflects the elements that tourists see as identifying the place or worth mentioning about it.

These online diaries are not just descriptions of travel experiences but reveal far more information about the evaluation of tourism products or about the experience, feedback and recommendations to their viewers (Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al., 2009). In telling their stories, bloggers may consciously and unconsciously reveal what they see of the world and how they see it (Bosangit et al., 2009). As Bosangit et al. (2009) explain, this confirms Linde’s (1993) claim that “narratives are means by which sense of self with others are conveyed and negotiated but, further, it demonstrates that in blogs narratives created in

collaboration with known others can be harnessed to convey self-identity to a wider audience” (Bosangit et al. 2009).

Hence, “travel blogs” are the result of a conscious effort by the part of tourists to represent, evaluate, make sense of and comprehend their experience and the visited place. Pan et al. (2007) describe this concept most eloquently saying that travel blogs reflect kaleidoscopic aspects of the experience in a destination, which means that accounts are filtered by the tourist lenses; they are experience and memory selections, of a colourful nature and changing shapes. For the authors, this kaleidoscopic perception and sense of the destination concern everything from attractions, accommodation and dining, to access and overall impressions. Most of the descriptions were “experiential and subjective in nature” (Pan et al., 2007). However, we must be also cautious when analysing information provided by tourists as some data and self-reported details may lack credibility and reliability. Deception or exaggeration exist in blogs (Jones & Alony, 2008).

Indeed, what tourists write or post in their travel blog reflects their constructed perception of the trip. The information we see has gone through a conscious selection and elaboration process, it is a representation where some things have been considered and others obviated, where some places have been mentioned and others have not, where some events have been explained in the way the tourist has lived them, or even in the way he or she would have liked to live them. Desforges (2000) mentioned that all tourists are aware of the problem of being a “travel bore” who goes too far in impressing their experiences on other people. For Desforges (2000), tourists “select certain parts of their experiences, cutting them up, exaggerating for effect, making connections between different places: in short, using a whole host of narrative devices to communicate some kind of story to others”.

We have to bear in mind that the content of blogs is written to be read, for an audience (social context) and with an audience in mind and therefore their narratives do not speak about themselves but also about their world (Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al., 2009). The audience of blogs could be divided into three groups, namely: a) family and friends b) other tourists and the general public, and c) tourism enterprises and destination management/marketing organizations (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). Bosangit and Mena (2009) state that “this large group of audience contributes to the potential of travel blogs as effective word-of-mouth communication”. A survey carried out among travel bloggers with 1,214 respondents by Bosangit (2009) (as cited in Bosangit & Mena, 2009) revealed that “family and friends are the most frequent readers of their travel blogs. One-third of the bloggers also stated that they occasionally receive comments from the general public regarding their blog entries. This is an indication that indeed travel blogs are being read not only by family and friends of the bloggers but also by the general public”.

Anderson (2008) sees the blogosphere as the new “Wisdom of Crowds”, as a space for collective intelligence and wisdom. The author compares the web with a kind of global brain where “the blogosphere is the equivalent of constant mental chatter in the forebrain, the voice we hear in all of our heads. It may not reflect the deep structure of the brain, which is often unconscious, but is instead the equivalent of conscious thought. And as a reflection of conscious thought and attention, the blogosphere has begun to have a powerful effect”. This means that the blogosphere and the blogs are very suitable settlements to look for social construction of meanings, and especially suitable to track conscious representations of place and image perception.

Furthermore, the content of blogs also conveys judgments, evaluations and recommendations from the part of tourists on multiple aspects and products, which renders this information not neutral and purposive. “With blogging, tourists become promoters or critiques of tourism products” (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). However, some authors, such as Carson (2008) claim that blog content is relatively shallow, and provides little detail about satisfaction, expectations, or recommendations. Although marketing directly related information such as product satisfaction and reviews, expectation fulfilment or customer recommendations is not abundant within travel blogs, it is present on many occasions directly or indirectly, and most importantly this lack of explicit evaluations is compensated by the outstandingly rich description of places and experiences they provide, comprising really suitable information to obtain the general perceived image of a tourism destination.

Travel blogs have a good number of positive **characteristics** that make them **suitable, or advantageous** in respect to other sources for the study of perceived tourist image.

Travel blogs enable us to observe travel experiences with reference to places and time, information that was traditionally unavailable (Lin & Huang, 2006). The content of the blog is often categorized by the blogger according to different topics, their mood or motivations, enabling faster and easier access to the information with greatest value (Jones & Alony, 2008). Once published, the information is stored as attributes and can be accessed later on but knowing when it was created (Lin & Huang, 2006); the information is easily accessed if compared to other sources; information is not just stored but also is accessible at any moment, instantly and freely (with no economic cost). Pan et al. (2007), stress how travel blogs are an inexpensive means to gather information. This represents a substantial advantage if compared to other traditional methods of studying perceived image: interviews, questionnaires, photograph analysis, offline travel narratives, etc. for the latter usually involve long periods of data collection, usually have an economic cost, and may not always be accessible. Furthermore, Jones and Alony (2008) emphasize that collecting qualitative data is usually tough as it is a synchronous and time-consuming method which demands the mutual availability of researcher and subject, and that the first is always concentrated and sensitive. Instead, blogs “offer an immediate availability of rich, codified data in an efficient package pre-prepared for analysis” which does not need synchronization, and are “less time- and resource-demanding”.

And information within travel blogs is not just stored and easily accessible but is also easily and frequently updated (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Hence, it can be said that if through other means the information might become out-of-date after a while, travel blogs enable access to both the “old” information and to the new, updated data. This characteristic of travel blogs shows their great potential to spot changes in the perceived image of a destination through time and make evolutionary studies.

Besides, the social nature of travel blogs is fundamental within image studies since through the blogger’s interaction, the collective perceptions and representations of place can be seen. Lin et al. (2006) point out this dynamic process of content creation in blogs, driven by a specific interest and human action. In travel blogs, peers can provide feedback directly, by posting comments, or indirectly by attaching links, for example. In traditional research, except for participant observation in groups, this interaction and social construction of meaning is indeed difficult to study, for normally, when tourists are interviewed or

questioned, they are not in contact with their social group and they are in a different temporal and spatial context. Instead, in travel blogs, the social construction of meaning is embedded within their very nature since they are community-based and genuinely interactive. They can be very useful “for destination marketers to assess their service quality and improve travelers’ overall experiences” (Pan et al., 2007).

One of the key advantages of extracting image perceptions from travel blogs seems to be the relative genuineness or “authenticity” of their content. “These experiences are written while the memories are still fresh and with an honesty often lacking in commercially written pieces, although not all sentences in blog articles describe real-life experiences” (Lin & Huang, 2006). “Their writing of these issues is opinionated and often unbiased, as they are free to express their own views, expecting no tangible consequences. In addition, as the need for introspection is one of the motivators to blog, personal accounts in blogs are typically candid and genuine, providing valuable insight into the issues present on individuals’ minds” (Jones & Alony, 2008). In the same way, Pan et al. (2007) ascertain that “travel blogs are an inexpensive means to gather rich, authentic, and unsolicited customer feedback”. It is acknowledged that in such settlements the information “might reflect the opinions and attitudes of travellers in a more genuine and representative way than other, more traditional methods of consumer research, given the more casual flow of information and the wide range of experiences described” (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). As Jones and Alony (2008) put it, the information is unbiased by research process, “blog data is by nature primary data which is not subject to the influence or interference of the researcher” (Jones & Alony, 2008) as the blogger is not aware of the research when writing. “Blogs may be seen as more representative of the ‘real’ thoughts and feelings of consumers” (Carson, 2008). Carson (2008) explains that this is an advantage compared to other qualitative methods in which the interview context changes the purpose of the conversation and conditions the information provided.

However, Jones and Alony (2008) point out possible biases affecting the reliability and validity of data stemming from social endorsement. As the authors explain, bloggers look for exposure, want to reach and appeal to readers, it is their goal. This may lead them to sensationalise issues, to create fictitious ones, to embellish experiences, to bias their topics, etc. in order to attract and please a greater audience. This issue has to be considered when analysing blogs although, as Jones and Alony (2008) point out, these potential biases “may not be different to biased autobiographies or other forms of self-accounts”. “In addition, the blogosphere has the potential to limit these biases, since social interactions resulting from blog interactions often transfer into the real world. This imposes a certain level of honesty” (Jones & Alony, 2008). As Pan et al. (2007) note from Nardi et al. (2004), documents are used to document one’s life, as a social commentary, as a catharsis and escape for feelings, and as a thinking tool, which for Pan et al. (2007) are all intrinsic motivations, indicating the genuineness of travel blogs and their potential similarities to travel journals as realistic and honest chronicles of visitors’ experiences.

A possible drawback of studying online settlements may be the loss of non-explicit information and “real” face to face interaction and gestures (Casaló, 2009). Even if such face-to-face information might not be available, the data obtained from these sources might be even richer and closer to the real image perception. This is because the information in travel blogs is not solicited and is not determined or conditioned by any external contextual

pressure; it is “uncensored” (Pan et al., 2007). In this sense the information found in travel blogs is quite distinct from that obtained through interviews or questionnaires. Tourists write for themselves and their social environment, without being conditioned by an artificial setting (e.g. an interview), by what the others (researchers, agents, etc.) might think, they do not have pressure from any external organism, etc. The only conditioning factors involved might be the unwritten social and group rules, but these are embedded within the very process of perceived image construction.

Furthermore, such “sincerity” in the content of travel blogs is enhanced by the way bloggers appear and relate to each other. In many virtual social environments, both the user’s identity and the information given might be dubious (Ridings et al., 2002), in spite of that it seems that with travel blogging “authenticity” is a fundamental part of the whole phenomenon. The identity of users is usually not hidden; bloggers share personal experiences with others and show pictures of themselves, they usually have a profile page where personal details are revealed, etc. It seems that the whole phenomenon of travel blogging is strongly related to self-identity and trustworthiness. Jones and Alony (2008) discuss the subject and point out possible problems in this sense, as there are no means to prevent fictitious blogs and, therefore, reliability and validity are not guaranteed. According to the authors, individuals can pretend to be of another social status, another educational level, another age, even another gender. Even if profile pages exist, bloggers can chose not to provide personal data, or to lie. These self-reported details cannot be verified. However, the authors agree that the need for recognition which boosts blog activity favours the exposition of true details and prevents deceptive and fictitious identities. In the same sense, “self-expression is a strong motivator for bloggers, which drive them to expose their true-self” (Jones & Alony, 2008). It could be assumed that even if dubious or exaggerated content and details may exist these will not be the general rule as genuineness is especially important in blogging.

Some other problems with their analysis may be related to “sample constraints and variety of subjects among bloggers’ population” (Jones & Alony, 2008). As the medium is a requisite for this public, people not familiar with new technologies would not be included in the sample, neither would be those who are not keen on writing in general or via the computer. There would probably be an underrepresentation of older age groups and of the developing countries. Even if such sample constraints exist, blogging is rapidly expanding and generalizing to major segments of population, and bloggers are already an interesting enough segment of population.

One basic positive aspect for blog analysis is the richness and depth of information available (Jones & Alony, 2008). The richness is provoked by the blog’s longitudinal nature, the connectivity between topics discussed, and the depth of information is a result of the free topic choice of bloggers, who write about issues of their interest and perhaps expertise.

On a practical level, such an enormous quantity of rich information as this had never been available before and had never been concentrated in such specific places as the hosting travel blog websites. In 2006, Lin and Huang observed that such systems were not yet widespread, and most of the location-specific personal experiences were stored separately on individual blog sites. In addition to that, the authors said that existing search engines did not provide satisfactory results because the search results for specific location names were often a vast collection of blog articles, and it became unrealistic to read them all. In spite of

that, the recent growth and generalization of travel blogs has been observed; therefore, on the one hand, through analysing blogs within hosting travel blogs sites, the relevant information is concentrated in one place, so the dispersion of information can be overcome and, on the other hand, with the new software available, thousands of blog pages can be analysed simultaneously. The fact that their content is made up of electronic data leads to a whole range of new ways of processing it, in particular through specialized software which enables researchers to extract information with great agility. "Information technology advances and increasingly large numbers of travel blogs facilitate travel blog monitoring as a cost-effective method" (Pan et al., 2007) to extract information.

Crotts, Mason and Davis (2009) emphasize the enormous volume of data likened to "drinking from a fire hose", the difficulty of analysing informal language in an unreserved manner and that the content is full of feelings that require special skills of subjectivity to interpret and identify them. Actually, the impurity of data (see section 2.2.6) is one of the major problems for perceived image analysis within blogs. Jones and Alony (2008) explain that "blogs are not always well written, succinct, concise or elaborate. The data offered by blogs can be difficult to investigate as they may contain errors, poor phrasing, or lengthy and irrelevant content" in addition to that, "individuals will also have varying competence with writing and language skills". However, these are not problems exclusive to blog analysis but a *leitmotiv* with most qualitative data. "Therefore, the analysis of blog content, as with many other types of analysis, has to be either treated as indicative, or triangulated with other data sources". In this sense, blogs enable further confirming and clarifying data by asking the blogger for clarification.

In summing up, it can be said that travel blogs have the following strengths as objects of perceived image analysis: they are ordered and classified geographically and chronologically thanks to their storage, which makes them easily accessible at all times with no economic cost. The information they convey is frequently updated and this makes them suitable to trace image evolution and provide the researcher with always updated data. Due to their social nature, the content of travel blogs can give in-depth insights into collective image representation and the social construction of meanings. Furthermore, it can be said that the information they gather is both genuine and unsolicited, and the sincere identity of the blogger seems to be part of the whole phenomenon. Finally, in practical terms, travel blogs concentrate great and rich quantities of information that can be processed using specialized software.

As some authors point out (Bosangit et al., 2009, Bosangit & Mena, 2009, Mariné-Roig, 2010), there is a need for a deeper understanding of travel blogs as a phenomenon and of the information they contain to be able to understand the tourism experience and therefore direct policies, marketing strategies, etc. They also need to be further understood as means of communication.

1.3.5.2.6. Travel blogs as spaces for projected image

Travel blogs, within the framework of the tourist image construction circle, are not only interesting as reflections of perceived image but also as objects creating, projecting and transmitting image in their own right through what we call the e-WOM effect. Understanding electronic word-of-mouth (see section 1.3.4.1.1) is fundamental to know what information will be transmitted online to potential tourists (Carson, 2008).

Travel blogs as information sources, must be labelled as secondary sources, specifically organic sources. According to Planas (2009) in her study on virtual tourists' travel blogs, it is not possible to classify blogs into solicited-organic or not solicited-organic, as visitors to the blogs may or may not be predisposed to visit the destination. Planas (2009) explains that if the readers of the blogs are not prone to visiting the destination, then the blogs act as unsolicited information sources. On the contrary, if the visitors to the blogs are prone to visiting the destination they act as solicited sources of information.

Travel blogs act similarly to informal peer-to-peer communication, for bloggers can read, write, comment, and recommend to each other directly; the writers and the readers are "interpersonally available" (Crotts, 1999). That means that without any technical knowledge, and by means of free online tools, the Internet surfer can act as a content projector at the same level that journalists or the general media do. This implies a radical change in the processes of diffusion, distribution and access to information (Tejedor, 2008) with the appearance of phenomena such as the so-called online viral effect or viral marketing. However, the consumer-to-consumer relationship that blogs provide has been overlooked by researchers (Pan et al., 2007) as well as their vast possibilities for information transmission.

Word-of-mouth is especially relevant in tourism as it has been consistently identified as a key source of trip planning information especially for independent travellers including backpackers, youth travellers, 'grey nomads' and self-drive tourists (Carson, 2008). The intangible nature of tourism products makes this interpersonal and seemingly independent word-of-mouth information really valuable for future tourists, who rely on others' experiences to plan their own ones, perhaps to the point that "e-word-of-mouth becomes the most important information source for travel planning" (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). Goods based on experiential qualities, such as travel and tourism, "cannot easily be determined before purchase, and it is for these types of goods that consumers will often rely heavily on product recommendations from others" and, not only that, but recommendations associated to an experiential product are more influential than recommendations about search products (Burgess et al., 2009), which aspect may be extrapolated to image. The opinions expressed within blogs have a higher perceived credibility if compared to traditional tourism information sources due to the perceived independence of the source when talking on an essentially experiential and intangible product (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). "This places them in a position of authority and as credible witnesses to the events they describe" (Wenger, 2008).

In addition to that, the influence representations within blogs may have on other users could be much stronger due to the readers' identification and empathy with the blogger's experience. Other media studies such as movie viewing (see Kim & Richardson, 2003) have reported that tourists when receiving movie images live a vicarious experience through them, that is, they feel identified with the characters, they feel empathic with them and in a way participate in them. The audience should not be "regarded as a mere observer but as an active information processor, vicariously experiencing the world in the film" (Kim and Richardson, 2003). Although the above authors' study results conclude that empathic involvement "is not the main cause for viewers to change their perceptions of locations depicted in films", in the case of travel blogs, we think such a vicarious experience and

identification with the producer of the image information when reading or looking at travel blogs may be stronger since the characters of the narrative in this case are real people (not actors performing a film), peer tourists, that could be the reader him or herself, who are describing real situations he or she could be living (in a hypothetical future). The sense of familiarity (see Kim & Richardson, 2003) with destinations, highly influential in tourism decision-making, driven by image exposure seems, therefore, to be occurring with travel blog reading.

This is especially true among bloggers who see these trustworthy reviews and recommendations as coming from peers and virtual communities “with whom they would be willing to bond electronically despite the geographical distance (Chung and Buhalis, 2008 as cited in Volo, 2010a). As blogs encourage the exchange of information between reader and author, the reader “becomes connected with the author, and this contributes to a sense of attachment” (Wenger, 2008).

As explained by Mack et al. (2008), “Greer (2003) reports that the amount of time we spend online is the strongest predictor of whether the online medium will be judged as credible”; according to Wenger (2008), demographic and psychographic characteristics of readers and authors influence the level of credibility too. In this sense Mack et al. (2008) address the issue of the perceived credibility of travel blogs if compared to traditional word-of-mouth and also their potential to become an effective channel for destination promotion. They suggest that such credibility depends on individual characteristics, such as gender, opinion leadership, and participation in online settlements. The authors conclude that, blogs are not as credible as traditional word-of-mouth but they do have positive similarities with it which makes travellers likely receptive to the contents found in them. Blogs may not be as credible as traditional word-of-mouth but neither are other methods of communication (Mack et al., 2008).

All in all, and even if not at the same level as traditional WOM, travel blogs could be classified as very influential especially for pre-trip image formation. These spaces and their content are particularly close and available to the tourist, they are not controlled by any foreign organization and they are written by tourist-peers (people interested in similar things). This personal connection makes their content highly credible and trustworthy.

Travel blogs actually fulfil the lack of direct experience with the tourist product (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Word-of-mouth or advice from friends and relatives often ranks as the most influential source of pre-purchase information, they will inevitably become favourite sources of travel information (Crotts, 1999). However, “when consumers read online blogs, most of the time they receive word-of-mouth from a stranger, not an acquaintance” (Mack et al., 2008). In this matter, although bloggers may not be close friends or relatives, with whom personal ties are strong, the relationship might also be quite close. Indeed, travel blogs could be situated near the “family and friends” group of influential image formation agents proposed by Gartner (1993), the one closest to the tourist (or the most influential). Due to the intangible nature of tourism and the tourist product, such narratives and recommendations from other fellow travellers, previous to the tourist experience itself, provide really handy and valuable information.

It seems that travel blogs will continue to be more and more influential means for projected image, driven by the exponential growth of bloggers and web surfers (Crotts, 1999) and by the large group of users who already read them (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). According to data, "in 2005, around 78% of online travelers, or 79 million Americans, logged online for travel information" (Mack et al., 2008). Advice from consumers who have already had a certain tourist experience and who are interpersonally available, will not only become a preferred source of pre-purchase information but also a very influential source for travel decision-making (Crotts, 1999). "The emergence of travel blogs will inevitably influence the link structure and the content of the information space for visitors, and will induce different informational content when a visitor searches for destination-specific information on the Internet" (Pan et al., 2007). As Akehurst (2008) notes from several studies, due to this perceived independence, online recommendations are growing in importance as information sources.

As an example of this great influential capacity of projected image in travel blogs, Lin & Huang (2006) analyse how a blog created by an amateur blogger actually triggered a chain reaction of word-of-mouth communication which popularized in a short period of time the Aegean Sea and Greece as a tourist destination among the Taiwanese public. Many studies confirm such importance of online word-of-mouth. Schmallegger and Carson (2008) cite a study by Compete Inc. which found that 20% of tourists actually consult them and trust their user-generated content when planning their trip and that about \$10 billion a year of online bookings are influenced by it. Schmallegger and Carson (2008) also mention a survey from eMarketer.com in which it was found that in the UK, considerably more consumers trusted sites with amateur reviews than professionally written guides or travel agencies. The authors also mention, concerning travel and tourism, a study of the Austrian National Organisation which revealed that German tourists judge online customer ratings as highly credible. Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy (2007), in their study about Tripadvisor.com users, revealed that during the planning phase these users frequently enjoyed reading through other user-generated contents, reviews and travel-related information which were then taken into account for their travel decisions.

Blogs, as projected image spaces, feedback the image construction circle, as authors such as Carson (2008) assert, "feedback from visitors helps reveal the strengths and weaknesses of a destination". Some researchers have investigated the role and the impact of such tourist communities as effective tourist information providers and as sources to monitor tourists' feedbacks (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Caton & Almeida (2008) referring to the works of Bruner (1991) and Urry (1990) argue that the exposure to representation [through the part of different media], helps to shape people's perception of local cultures and to direct their gaze when travelling. Tourists would therefore search for sights to direct their gaze which were in keeping with the representations they internalized at home about places and cultures. The content of travel blogs embodies powerful representations, shaping other tourists' perceptions as they read them, and these dynamics could go on and on as these tourists may in turn write new travel blogs.

Referring to the framework of the image construction circle, travel blogs are perhaps one of the first settlements along with other 2.0 devices that clearly embody both image projection and, more especially, tourism perceptions or feedbacks into the ongoing image construction circle. This aspect of feeding back to the image circle, even if studied by some authors (Albers & James, 1988, Jenkins, 2003; Molina & Esteban, 2006; Caton & Almeida, 2008), still

represents an underresearched subject within tourism and image studies. In addition, the methods used to analyse such an active feedback or reproduction of image by tourists have been mostly indirect. With travel blogs we observe the completion of the “hermeneutic circle” (Albers & James, 1988) (see section 1.2.3) from the very same moment that other bloggers read them and become influenced by their content. This facet of blogs closes the hermeneutic circle of image construction and pushes it to spin and to move on and on within this dialectic relationship of projected and perceived images. They are at the same time an expression of tourist image perception and also act as image projectors in a word-of-mouth way. Authors such as Pan et al. (2007) emphasize the necessity to investigate new methods to better understand the function of blogs as online communication means. The present study will try to shed light on this issue, as the same methodology to analyse perceived image can be used to see in which way users contribute to the creation of image. A new theoretical framework for destination image construction becomes necessary to include the nature of travel blogs and other social media as both objects of projected and perceived images.

1.3.5.3. User-generated travel reviews

Some Internet devices with very similar characteristics and content to travel blogs are some types of travel reviews. As Johnson, Sieber, Magnien and Ariwi (2012) contend, travel or tourism reviews posted online by tourists are an emerging source of data to support tourism research; and tourist review websites represent a new way in which tourists can provide feedback about their experiences at a destination in a word-of-mouth way (Johnson et al., 2012). They act as consumer-to-consumer communication (Patel, 2011) and their use and creation rapidly grows (Yoo & Gretzel, 2009; O’Connor, 2010).

Travel reviews, similarly to travel blogs, also contain User-Generated Content about destinations, and are also temporally and geographically classified. “User-generated review websites contain elaborately organized online reviews that are created by the customer and then made available to other online users via interactive technology Applications” (Patel, 2011). As part of the UGC they contain data in the form of “text, photos, tags, audio or video created by an individual and hosted online, where it is accessible to others” (Johnson et al., 2012). Similarly to travel blogs, their “primary functions are the collection and dissemination of user-generated content—reviews, ratings, photos, and videos—on travel” (O’Connor, 2010). Therefore they can be similarly used to extract tourist image of a destination and its elements.

The main difference between travel blogs and travel reviews is that travel blogs are mainly concerned with destinations (with a geographical classification of entries) and, instead, travel reviews, although departing from a geographical classification, when creating a review, users usually encounter previously created templates about specific tourist attraction factors, services or activities. So usually their user-generated reviews are focused on a specific element. “There is usually a huge number of reviews available for the same product, service or destination”; a user reading a travel review expects that it “provides him/her with information and gives recommendations about a place or service” (De Ascaniis & Gretzel, 2012). Usually in travel reviews, users are asked to provide a score or rating about the attraction factor, service or activity, apart from comments.

Authors such as Banyai and Glover (2011) emphasize the difference between travel blogs and review sites. According to these authors their difference lies in that travel review sites allow consumers to provide both qualitative and quantitative reviews of tourism products such as hotels, attractions, and other travel experiences (O’Conner, 2008 as in Banyai & Glover, 2011) while, travel blogs are online diaries and stories meant to provide information and engage the reader in the travel experience (Banyai & Glover, 2011).

Although we acknowledge that travel blogs and reviews are different, certain types of travel reviews contain similar information to travel blog content and thus, can be jointly analysed with the other data as previously explained. Authors such as O’Connor (2010) stress that travel review sites are difficult to categorize because they are “part social network, part virtual community, and part blog”. The type of travel reviews more similar to travel blog entries and that serve to study better the image of a destination are those related to specific destinations and attraction factors. Instead, travel reviews related to accommodation, dining and other very specific products are more focused on marketing and booking purposes and are not so adequate for extracting the image of a destination in general. Although Banyai and Glover (2011) emphasize that travel review websites such as TripAdvisor.com should not be considered travel blogs, some of their reviews can be equated to travel blog entries. TripAdvisor.com does not contain the standard entries of other travel blog websites, but facilitates, to a great extent, the presence of user-generated content through the creation of user reviews about attraction factors, classified by states, regions, towns, types and activities. TripAdvisor.com gives users the ability to create UGC entries in a similar way to travel blogs.

As well as in the case of travel blogs, travel reviews are written with an audience in mind, they are created to be read, “thus, different strategies are employed to reach the goal of catching the interlocutor’s attention” (De Ascaniis & Gretzel, 2012). Examples of travel review hosting websites in tourism are TripAdvisor.com, Virtualtourist.com, IgoUgo.com and Lonelyplanet.com.

Some authors have studied the subjects of trustworthiness and credibility in the case of travel reviews (Yoo & Gretzel, 2009; Ku, 2012; Patel, 2011; O’Connor, 2010). Ku (2012) evaluates the trustworthiness of reviews in the online travel community and elaborates a method to detect fake reviews. This author raises the concern that reviews are not fully reliable since all reviews are generated by users without specific author information and no fair judge framework has existed until now. The main concern is that “as the use of online reviews grows, so does the risk of providers trying to influence review postings through the submission of false reviews” (Yoo & Gretzel, 2009). Some travel review websites such as TripAdvisor.com even acknowledge this trustworthiness concern and claim to be the “largest site for unbiased travel reviews”. However, other authors contend that the belief that user-generated travel review sites are compromised by false reviews is unfounded and there is little evidence of fake postings (O’Connor, 2010). Moreover, as Patel (2011) comments, sites such TripAdvisor.com have mechanisms to spot fraudulent posts and although some fake comments may slip through, “the sheer volume of reviews should eventually paint an accurate picture”.

Be that as it may, we believe that the problem of fake reviews concerns more the case of reviews referring to specific accommodation, dining, service facilities or products, where an

economic interest and market competition may directly be underlying. In this case the marketers of these businesses may generate fake reviews to counteract bad reputation or to boost the positive image online. Instead, travel reviews of destinations, tourist sites and attraction factors, the ones targeted in this research, may be highly trustworthy, similarly to travel blogs and reviews as no directly commercial purpose lies behind them, and they may be highly influential.

In relation to trustworthiness and similarly to travel blogs, travel review “sites often display demographic or other data about reviewers (for example, the length of their membership, their location, the number of times they have posted reviews in the past, etc.) to help build credibility and trust” (O’Connor, 2010). It seems that, similarly to T-blogs, frequent travellers in particular “see peer reviews as superior to other information sources and are more likely to be highly influenced” by them (O’Connor, 2010).

Indeed many authors acknowledge travel reviews’ growing influence for tourism Planning and decision-making (Patel, 2011; Gretzel et al., 2007). Gretzel et al. (2007) conducted a survey on a total of 7,000 TripAdvisor.com travel reviewers in January 2007; some of the main results showed that more than half of users (57.8%) always read other travellers’ online reviews when they planned a pleasure trip, while 36.7% read them very often or frequently. Online travel reviews were used by a majority to narrow down choices (64.7%) and to get ideas when starting to plan the trip (63.7%). As in the case of travel blogs, almost all the travel reviewers read other travellers’ reviews. Although travel reviews seem to have a major influence over decisions about “where to stay”, 32.5% of users find it very important to decide “what to do”, and 27% “where to go”. Indeed, over 90% of them think other travellers’ reviews influence them in learning about a travel destination, product or service, in evaluating alternatives, avoiding places or services they would not enjoy, and providing them with ideas. “Review writers have a greater tendency to think that other travelers’ reviews are more likely to provide up-to-date, reliable, unbiased, relevant, and enjoyable information than travel service providers”. Moreover, and very similarly to travel blogs, the main motivation for posting reviews is to “help others by sharing their own positive experiences”, motivations such as self-enhancement, extending the experience and social benefits are also among the top-rated (Gretzel et al., 2007). All this shows the potential travel reviews content may have on the formation of the tourist image of a destination.

De Ascaniis and Gretzel (2012) study specifically what is in the online travel review title, as this information will, in many cases, be the one users will use to browse among the different reviews and that will give the first overview to the reader about that product, service or destination. Other studies, focus on the marketing, revenue and reputation impact that user-generated travel reviews may have on tourist services and businesses such as hotels (Patel, 2011).

1.3.5.4. Official tourism websites

As UGC and travel blogs are gaining such importance for tourists’ image formation, behaviour and decision-making, it becomes fundamental for destinations to see how congruent or dissonant the user-generated image is from the official image of a destination. Usually this official image is reflected online through official tourism websites. We think that

the best way to study and compare official image with User-Generated image is also through an online source the official representatives of destinations online.

1.3.5.4.1. Official tourism websites as image and information sources

As explained before, the majority of agents that existed before the arrival of the Internet also operate online now and thus project their images through said majoritarian channel. Official Tourism Organizations of destinations were not an exception and practically all of them adapted to the Internet era by creating their websites. Today, one of the main tools for the communication of official city brands is the World Wide Web; the Internet and new information technologies play a key role in communicating the cities (or destinations) and their brands (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). There has been, and there still is, an enormous proliferation of destination websites run by the official tourism organizations. In such abundance of contents image transmission is not always effective and just being online is not enough.

Although official tourism organizations may create or incorporate different types of websites (such as product recommenders, booking sites, etc.) their most visible form online is the Official Tourism Website (OTW) or the official tourism board. Official tourism websites are fundamental tools for tourist image dissemination, destination and brand promotion, marketing and communication (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). Indeed, official tourism websites are the public and visible face of destinations; hence, their conception, display and usability will influence the tourists' choice of destination and will become part of the tourists' perceived image. Moreover, websites provide large quantities of information which is up-to-date and very visual, with images, texts, videos and other resources which enable users to have virtual experiences and interact with one another (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010). As Cho and Cheon (2005) describe, official tourism websites "may serve for diverse communication purposes: public relations, sales promotion, advertising or direct marketing" (as cited in Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

As we go further into the Information Era, the role of websites is changing. They are evolving from being merely sources of information, that is, intermediaries between tourists and destinations, to being involved in tourist transactions. The Internet provides users with a way of obtaining much more varied and detailed information on the destinations and the cities than that which existed before. However, in addition it enables them, through the same web space, to make consultations and reservations quickly and easily. As Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) comment from Klein's (2003) study, websites are considered the future of communication on the Internet as they offer a large quantity of information and, in addition, create virtual product experiences. Moreover, they are the conveyors of brand image.

Official tourism websites are fierce representatives of the language and discourse of tourism online and, through multiple supports (pictures, written texts, audiovisuals, etc.), contain the different attraction factors of the destinations, their attributes, identities, and the language to seduce and persuade tourists to visit that destination (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010). Official tourism websites provide information to users at all stages of the trip: pre-visit (they help to take decisions and plan the trip), *in situ* (to look for useful information) and post-visit stages (post comments and write about the experiences). As communicative tools, official

tourism websites use linguistic texts and visual texts, and allow viewers or future tourists to travel to the destination visually and epistemically, they provide a complete vision of a destination, hence the importance of studying them (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010). "It is fundamental to be conscious of what an important tool for image, communication and marketing these websites are for the destinations and cities" (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009).

Some of the authors analysing official tourism websites in relation to tourist image and branding are Pitt et al. (2007), who aim to analyse the website brand communication of several African countries; Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) who aim to ascertain the degree of evolution and development of city brands, and their dissemination through the websites of their official institutions, as well as how the city brands were treated on the official destination websites. Lepp, Gibson and Lane (2010) investigated images and risks associated with Uganda and whether exposure to Uganda's official tourism website could induce perceived image change. Huertas et al. (2010) studied, among others, the image symbolism of the Catalonia and Wales brands through their official websites. As Opoku (2006) explains, by analysing the content of a website destination image can be understood, and by making comparisons with what is being communicated on other websites, the relative intended positioning of a brand can both be comprehended and managed.

Official tourism websites convey tourist representations and thus play an important role in identity construction and communication. In their book, among other issues Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger (2010) analyse the relationship of tourist identity and official tourism websites. They analyse the promotion and construction of national identities through narratives, and also through metaphors which lead to assign values associated with the metaphor to the destination itself. They also analyse official tourism websites to uncover the representations of the self and the other by reinforcing established stereotypes. As the authors explain "what tourism websites do for a nation, state, or other destination in constructing it as a tourist locale, endowing it with salience through its attractions and attractiveness, the virtual representations of the locale do for the prospective tourist". Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger explain that, "through linguistic and visual semiotic codes, these tourism sites foster social action that contributes to the (re)construction of nations and other communities by variably fostering re-imagination, rebirth, renaissance, promotion and caution, and patriotism". For the authors, tourism websites purposefully include some texts and exclude others and construct an identity for the destination which is both indicative and inviting. Through their narratives they tell stories that position their nations as destinations and their users as tourists and invite tourists to engage with them during the planning process. In the end, "through the interactive process of creating and consuming tourism websites, these representations are given meaning by the potential tourists who explore them" (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010).

1.3.5.4.2. Themes and what is transmitted within official websites

Other studies, focus more on official tourism websites' content or themes. Pitt, Campbell, Berthon, Nel and Loria (2008) analyse the official governmental communication of Central American nations' websites. They see how and through what messages they promote their brands. They identified the main themes of the websites' content: tourism, country, city, passengers, culture, etc. Each country portrays a different theme; some point to cultural

heritage and natural attractions while others relate redundant or uninspiring facts about tourism growth or country facts. For the authors, such results speak for the appeal of the brand that each country is exhibiting.

Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) in their analysis of eight city official tourism websites found that what is best transmitted through the web is the functional conceptual brand of the cities, the strong points or the potential that they wish to promote; but in no way the emotional conceptual brand, which ascribes personality values to the destination.

The study of Huertas (2008) on official tourism websites of the Costa Daurada region in Catalonia shows that websites provided information on topography and geography (83.3%), climate and weather (77.8%) and on how to arrive at the destination (88.9%), and also provided a list of useful telephone numbers (77.8%). Finally 94.4% of the websites also included maps and guides to enable users to locate and situate themselves at the destination. Information on cultural aspects and customs (88.9%), festivals (83.3%), cultural events (88.9%) and leisure activities (94.4%) were widely available on the websites analysed. The author found that Costa Daurada websites provided a great deal of cultural information. There were, however, other aspects with regard to which the websites offered very little information. For example, only 55.6% of the websites provided information on an aspect as important for tourists as public transport; furthermore, only 22.2% provided information on opening times, 11.1% on the currency and 5.6% on suitable clothing, the traffic situation and special tourist offers. Similarly, recommended itineraries, which are very, very useful information for tourists who do not know a location, were only provided in 66.7% of the websites. Likewise, business tourism-related information (congress halls, business infrastructure and associations) were only present in 55.6% of the websites analysed. Regarding accommodation, the study found that most websites (88.9%) provided information (usually lists according to categories). However, a number of websites (11.1%) only offered a single list of accommodation, without distinguishing between kinds of establishments or categories, and only 5.6% provided an accommodation list that was broken down by location and according to category or price.

Contents of official tourism websites can vary greatly, in general depending on the destination and the geographical scope of the website.

1.3.5.4.3. Potential influence of official tourism websites

Today, almost all destinations are online. How effective the image communication or the promotion of official tourism websites is, and how much it can influence the tourist, becomes a fundamental matter for destinations.

As Park & Gretzel (2007) explain, more and more research is addressing the subject of “defining, measuring, and managing e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty” by focusing, mainly, on key factor measures which “address customers’ needs, wants, and expectations toward a Web site”. Conscious of the importance and investment of destination marketing organizations in the development of their web sites as part of their overall promotion efforts, Park and Gretzel (2007), conducted a study on the **evaluation** of website success. The authors came up with a unified framework of commonly used Web site success factors arising from the analysis and included a total of nine factors: (1) information quality; (2) ease

of use; (3) responsiveness; (4) security/privacy; (5) visual appearance; (6) trust; (7) interactivity; (8) personalization; and (9) fulfilment (see table 1.5). *These nine factors are fundamental for official tourism websites to succeed.* Some of these aspects are crucial in creating positive e-wom: “The authors also claimed that loyalty through means of customer retention is critical to the success of any e-business because loyal customers significantly contribute to customer acquisition through positive word-of-mouth”.

Table 1.5
Description of unified key evaluation factors

Key factors	Description
Ease of Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usability, accessibility, navigability • Logical structure
Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of service representatives, e-mail service, reply to online reservations • Contact information • Availability of help functions such as a toll-free telephone, intuitive online help
Fulfillment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order process, accuracy of service promises, billing accuracy • Online booking process and confirmation • On-time delivery
Security/Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting information during transmission and subsequent storage • Security for online purchases/reservations • Privacy/confidentiality statement
Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized or individualized attention • Customization of offerings and of information
Visual Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract attention • Convey image • Aesthetics
Information Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety, scope, currency, conciseness, accuracy of information • Authority, reliability, uniqueness of information
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand recognition • Consistency • Intentions • Credibility
Interactivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive features such as virtual tours • Interactive communication (FAQs, guest books, chat)

Source: Park & Gretzel (2007)

Some studies have focused on the capacity of websites to project brand personality dimensions of the destinations. As Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) explain, “Hosany, Ekinci and Uysal (2006), demonstrated that the emotional and personifiable values have positive influences on the intention to visit, purchase and recommend destinations on the part of consumers; but observed that the emotional aspect and the personality of the brand that are the least developed aspects on the official websites of the cities analyzed”. As previously mentioned, the study on city brands by Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) found that although functional and conceptual values of brands are well transmitted through official websites, the emotional aspect of the brand which describes person-like values to the destination were forgotten. This may be a reason why tourists may trust more other users’ opinions and feel closer to their opinions and engaged with them, as users use both affective and cognitive components when describing destinations.

Pitt et al. (2007) analysed website brand communication by African nations using Aaker’s brand personality dimensions. Pitt et al. (2007) found that some countries have specific brand personalities while others are failing to communicate their brand personalities

distinctly. While some countries created strong effective online brand personalities, others did not position themselves clearly on particular dimensions or did not communicate personality assets at all.

Some research has analysed official tourism websites in relation to risk communication. As mentioned before, Lepp et al. (2010) analysed how the tourist-perceived image of a destination (Uganda) related to its risk can change after exposure to its official tourism website, and found, that although pre-test images were eminently negative concerning risk, after exposure to the official tourism website, images were significantly more positive and perceived risk was reduced, showing their potential influence. Huertas and Fernández-Cavia (2009) compared risk communication with tourist communication of a territory focusing on the city of Tarragona (Spain) and its surrounding area.

A very important issue affecting the capacity of influence of official tourism websites is their **Trustworthiness**. According to Gartner's (1993) classification of information sources, official tourism websites should be placed among the less credible sources as they are entirely controlled by the destination, they are the farthest from the tourist and thus, the least credible. In spite of that, some studies suggest that official tourism websites are seen by the public as reliable and trustworthy, and that the same public suggests that 2.0 should be incorporated in these sites: "while information provided by state tourism websites is clearly considered the most important and reliable source of online travel information, participants in this study felt it was useful when travel operators responded to UGC posted online. Similarly, most people felt that existing state tourism websites could be enhanced by incorporating functions to allow real travellers to contribute UGC to them" (Cox et al., 2008a).

The study conducted by Cox et al. (2008a) shows that for both users who are used to using UGC for travel planning and users who do not use UGC, the information provided by State tourism websites is the most important of the different types of websites and information online (about 90% of users consider it very important). Hence the importance and opportunities to reach people of these types of websites. However, contrastingly, the results of Fotis et al. (2012) show that the online user-generated content, such as the information provided by other travellers in various websites and the social media, as well as the friends and relatives, are more trustworthy information sources than official tourism websites.

Be that as it may, the capacity of a website to reach the tourist or be effective depends in great measure on the **use of new technologies** and on the incorporation of web 2.0, which affect ease of use and interactivity aspects, among others. As Park and Gretzel (2007) note from several works (Buhalis, 2000; Gretzel et al., 2006; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2006), today the successful integration of websites and information technology into the fabric of their organizations and marketing strategies is critical for DMOs to survive as destination promoters and intermediary information sources between tourism suppliers and tourists. "Given the importance of word-of-mouth in tourism, fostering and managing positive eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) through a DMO Web site is a must" (Park & Gretzel, 2007). The broader the technological tools the better. However, as Banyai and Glover (2011) comment, little has been done by DMOs to try to integrate tools such as travel blogs as research marketing tools. The authors insist that DMOs should gain access to tourists' experiences as reflected in travel blogs and online media as "the uniqueness of the travel experience can

offer DMOs the competitive advantage needed to differentiate themselves from other destinations”.

As Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) point out, to assess the influence that tourist image projected through official tourism websites has on tourists, studies should not be limited to analysis of the websites’ content only, but “should take into account aspects such as the interactivity or usability of their pages”. The authors focused on the analysis of usability and interactivity of websites for 40 selected major tourist destination cities and determined the importance of usability and interactivity in terms of enhancing the visibility of the websites. These authors found that although the majority of websites analysed had high usability indexes and paid a lot of attention to ease of navigation, contrarily, interactivity was much less implemented, with the most used resources being those that corresponded to the consumer-message or consumer-marketer relationship, despite being generally underused. In general, the websites analysed had a better structure, design and usability than interactivity.

Different research on websites shows that usability is a key aspect in the creation of a good brand image and note from several studies that sites that seem to be or are easier to open, navigate or use, create a more favourable attitude and image among users (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). “Usable websites are easy to learn, allow tasks to easily be remembered, are intuitive and promote efficient use of the web space. There are noted benefits from making websites as usable as possible, coming from the improved visitor experience” (Cox et al., 2008b). According to Cox et al. (2008b) the usability of websites entails websites being learnable, easy to remember, reliable and efficient to use and satisfactory for the audience; usable websites achieve notable benefits as visitors’ experience improves. As Cox et al. (2008b) explain, usability can be related to aspects such as page design, content quality, ease of locating information and the simplicity of navigation, in addition to the subjective perception of the user. “Smaller websites with basic iconography that are easy to use create a positive image and facilitate decision making about visiting a destination” (Huertas, 2008). The option of consulting a website in different languages “is crucial in terms of foreign tourist accessibility to destinations”, the more languages the better (Huertas, 2008).

Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) explain with regard to interactivity, that Liu (2003) defends the idea that the concept of interactivity unites three correlated but different factors: the active control of information, bidirectional communication and the synchronicity or simultaneity of communication. Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) also note that Cho & Cheon, (2005) divide the concept of interactivity into three fields of action or types: consumer-message interactivity, consumer-consumer interactivity and consumer-marketer interactivity. Consumer-message interactivity refers to the ability of the user to personalize his or her relationship with the contents of the page according to his or her interests and motives. Consumer-marketer interactivity centres on the communication between the user of a website and the organizers or those responsible for the content, which may be bidirectional. Consumer-consumer interactivity is the relationship that may be created between the people that access a website (virtual communities, chats, forums, etc.). As deduced from the study of Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009), websites with better interactivity probably generate more favourable attitudes towards the website, the destination and the image within it; moreover, high interactivity usually leads to high online

visibility. The authors show that “the majority of websites analyzed use many more resources that belong to the consumer-message interaction, than to the consumer-marketer, and consumer-consumer interaction”.

With regard to user-to-user interactivity or web 2.0 resources within official tourism websites, the study of Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) on major cities’ tourism websites reveals that the user-to-user interaction devices in these sites were very scarce and that there was great inequality in the use of interactive resources by the different official tourism websites. The device which is the most widespread is the online postcard service (in about 40%) of cases, which enables users to send online postcards without delay or cost. However, only one website was identified as possessing a chat space for users and “the possibility for consumers to tell their stories, experiences and summaries of trips” was only found in a few sites. Moreover, none of the websites analysed was found to offer services of a cyber-club of users with advantages or a cyber-community with common interests (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). As we can extract from this study, the incorporation of official tourism websites to 2.0 is still partial and at an initial stage, which “means that the information obtained on the part of the website users is minimum”. Likewise Huertas’s (2008) study of the application of the new technologies in the official tourism websites of small and medium-sized tourist destinations found that their potential was underexploited, particularly in terms of interactivity options and the use of Web 2.0 and e-commerce.

As Huertas and Fernández-Cavia (2009) explain “on the leisure and holiday place selection purchase process, and especially on international contexts, communication, and specifically Web communication, develops a basic role” because tourists, who base their decisions on expectations search for information before buying, and expectations are held on information.

The information on the Internet is vast and therefore it is not sufficient for destinations just to be “online”. To be able to influence the tourist, the websites may need to make a difference and be outstanding in the incorporation of new technologies, web 2.0 devices, virtual reality devices, links, etc. Due to the 2.0 revolution and to DMOs becoming aware of its importance, these websites have progressively incorporated web 2.0 devices for user interaction. However, this incorporation of web 2.0 devices is still in its infancy on official tourism websites. “Despite the importance of the opinions and experiences of other travellers in the decision to visit a tourist destination, very few official destination websites currently facilitate user-to-user interaction” (Huertas et al., 2011). “There is typically a time lag between the development of new technologies and their application to the communication of the tourist destinations. Destinations make use of new technologies according to their needs, the importance of tourism for the region and the availability of resources, not to mention in function of the enterprising spirit of their management teams” (Huertas, 2008). As Cox et al. (2008b) explain, while travellers have importantly embraced UGC, in general the travel industry has responded irregularly to it or is still unsure of how to respond. However, as the authors note, due to the critical role UGC is acquiring in the tourist information search and planning process, the interest in integrating UGC into travel websites is growing.

The more complex websites that incorporate advertising, marketing and sales applications and interactive resources, which, in an entertaining way, provide services and attract the attention of users, are called Destination Management Systems (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). Increasingly, “portals or broader websites are starting to be created, which offer, in addition to tourist information, business and leisure information for the citizens” (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). An example of how official tourism websites have incorporated 2.0 devices is that of Tourism British Columbia which “encouraged staff to initiate blogging on the state’s tourism website and later expanded this to accommodate independent reviews posted by individual travellers. Operators have noted increased visitation, credibility and loyalty” (Cox et al., 2008b).

As Cox et al. (2008a) note from the work of Choi et al. (2007), “understanding the role of UGC sites related to travel organisations is essential to ensure the successful marketing of a destination given that research has shown that DMO websites are an important source of information across all stages of the traveller’s trip planning process”. A fundamental aspect for the success of websites today is their online visibility, use and size (Mariné-Roig, 2013). Official tourism websites have the potential to reach far more people if they are well positioned or visible in the search engines. Usually, people when doing a search through the net use search engines such as Google, Yahoo or Bing (the three biggest), and usually the first information appearing on a destination on the search engines is the official tourism website. From a marketing perspective, “brand websites have been marked as the future of marketing communication on the Internet, as they have the potential to provide high levels of information and, in addition, create virtual product experiences (Klein, 2003)” (as cited in Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). Moreover, UGC devices incorporated into tourism organization websites have the potential to raise the profile of the website in the most popular Internet search engines because of the increasing prominence user-generated content is given in search engine rankings; hence, “businesses who integrate consumer reviews into their own websites are most likely to be found based on key word searches” (Cox et al., 2008a).

1.3.6. Perceived tourist image becomes projected through user-generated content

In this final section of the theoretical framework we wished to emphasize the new role that the tourist and his/her perceived image achieves online with 2.0 communication in keeping with the importance and implications of studying tourists’ “talk” and tales for destination image formation, identity and place transformation. User-Generated Content spaces on the Internet, and especially web 2.0, open up a new wide range of possibilities for perceived image study that were unimaginable before.

As explained before, perceived image has been far less studied than projected image as it has always been considered more inaccessible. The reason for such historical inaccessibility is that participation by the tourist in perceived image studies always seemed necessary (at least until today). In this respect, the nature of the object of study of perceived image in comparison to projected image is very different. Projected image could be studied through objects such as adverts, guidebooks, postcards, souvenirs, TV, Internet websites, etc. which are easily found and gathered if necessary; there is *no need* to speak to the agent in question projecting these images. Instead, the means of studying perceived image have always been intrinsically bound to the participation of the tourist, and there lies the difficulty of study. It

is not the same to get a few guidebooks which are publicly available in shops as to get tourists to participate, for example, in an interview. The latter is far more complicated as it not only depends on the researcher but also on the willingness of the tourist to participate. Even if what we study are photographs taken by tourists, where the presence of the tourist is not necessary, at some point it is necessary to contact the tourist and to ask him or her to give the researcher access to them.

As far as we have observed, perceived image has been historically studied through interviews with tourists, participant observation with tourist groups, focus groups, analysis of travel diaries, drawings of mind mapping, polling, analysis of tourists' photographs, etc. All these methods are usually highly time-consuming and highly costly in economic terms (as sometimes incentives must be given to participants), and sometimes it is not even very feasible if the tourists are not willing to participate.

However, today, these limitations are vanishing with the access to User-Generated Content online. The very same nature of the content of web 2.0 (user-generated) gives researchers access to what the tourists perceive, think, suggest, express and transmit to others. In this sense, web 2.0 has the extraordinary characteristic of being a platform through which image is projected and at the same time through which perceived image is expressed. Before, tourists could only transmit what they had perceived or experienced to a reduced circle of acquaintances. Today web 2.0 enables them to project tourist image to the whole world.

It must be said that the very moment this perceived image is posted online and someone else reads it, it becomes projected, or as we shall call it, "transmitted image". The term transmitted image should be clarified in order better to understand future developments. Some authors use the term transmitted image as a synonym of the concept of projected image, an image send by agents and DMOs to tourists. Balmer and Greyser (2003) distinguished four different types of images: transmitted images, receiver-end image, focus-of image and construed-image. For these authors, transmitted image contains the projected image created and projected by stakeholders, some visual images and desired future images, all tightly bound to the agents' role. Moreover, the authors position tourists as receivers-end (they could be interpreted as passive receivers of image). Similarly Martin and Hetrick (2006) applied the term transmitted image to the image exclusively transmitted by corporate designers. However, we consider those views to be too restrictive and we do not agree with the definition they give of transmitted image. For us, in this new online context of 2.0 communication, tourists must be seen as an active and fundamental part of image creation and transmission. Our conception of transmitted image is broader and more similar to that of Galí and Donaire (2004). For Galí and Donaire (2004), transmitted image includes several types of images, universal, induced, ephemeral, etc. which "reproduce signs with a meaning that has been socially constructed and disseminated". The authors assess that "there is a transmitter that consciously or not, creates a certain image of a place. It transmits concepts, attributes, values, impressions, smells, words and visions that shape the image of an area" (Galí & Donaire, 2004). In this research we understand transmitted image as a broader concept which would include not only projected image by DMOs and all the received, perceived, transmitted and projected images by agents, but especially the image transmitted

by tourists online too, especially through the social media (web 2.0 and travel 2.0) for example, which is at the same time a perceived and transmitted image.

Although we say this UGC transmitted image embodies perceived image, it embodies an already selected and processed perceived image, implying the action of tourists. In the first place it reflects the post-experience image. In the second place, what is seen online is what the tourists have chosen to transmit, they may have exaggerated, they may have not mentioned certain things, and they may have selected some elements over others. Therefore the image posted online is very important as it is not the reflection of exactly what is inside the tourists' minds, their actual perceptions, but of what these tourists purposefully want to transmit about a destination. This image "ready" to be transmitted, which has been processed by tourists, is probably more relevant in a context where Internet (user-to-user) communication and tourism information seeking and planning are becoming predominant. This perceived-transmitted image will be the one potentially reaching thousands of people.

We believe web 2.0 opens up a lot of new possibilities to reach tourists' opinions without cost and in semi-automatic ways of processing information. On the one side, web 2.0 enables researchers to go directly to users' "talk" and tales about a destination. Moreover, this type of web enables studying *in situ* and *a posteriori* image, which we think is very important as image *a posteriori* reflects a process of image assimilation and selection. If we have access to it, we can more or less know what the tourist has kept from the trip, what he or she has considered to be more important, get clues as to his or her satisfaction.

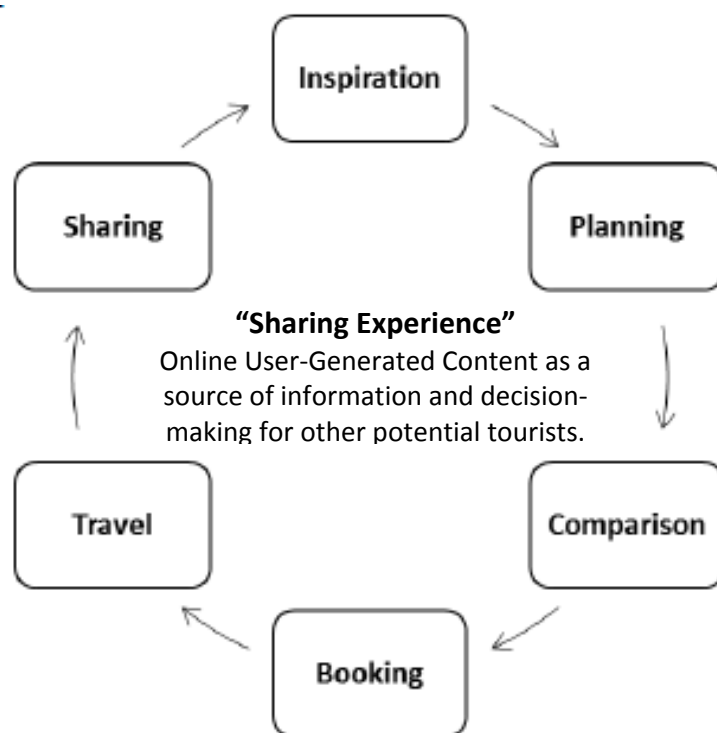
It is very remarkable that in the past, information about other tourists' perceptions was unavailable to tourists or it was very limited (only from direct friends and relatives). Now, tourist peers can access the information of other (anonymous) tourist peers, and what these tourists have perceived and experienced can be accessed by other users. For the first time it could be said that perceived tourist image is available online for everybody to see, comment on, share, etc.

This transmission of perceived image online is possible in the present context and contributes to fostering this context where: 1. there is a generalized use of the Internet in the process of information and of decision-making by tourists, 2. the purchase process is increasingly meditated and dilated in time, as tourists consult multiple sources and configure their "tourist pack" and services themselves. 3. there is great interaction with other users in spaces of the so-called online web 2.0 where content is shared by the users themselves according to their previous experiences and future interests. 4. other users' opinions are highly credible, more so than the official communications of destination management organizations (González, 2010).

Moreover, we maintain that with web 2.0 the process of pre-trip planning has changed as well as the process that occurs after the trip experience. We think that the web 2.0 has brought about an outstanding and **key idea** which enables both the transformation of the concept of perceived image into transmitted image online, and that enables the incorporation of this transmitted image into other tourists' perceived images. This is the idea of the "Shared experience" (González, 2010). The idea of sharing, makes us understand how the cycle of today's transmission and perception of tourist image online is closed.

González's (2010) report mentions the "shared experience" concept as a central idea in the travel planning and decision-making process today incorporating web 2.0. The shared experience concept enables incorporating the influence and use of UGC as a source of information and decisions of other tourists. In the pre-trip phase of trip planning, tourists seek UGC or shared experiences of others, and in the post-trip phase they feed back to the circle by sharing their experiences and opinions with other users, to restart the circle again (see figure 1.10).

Figure 1.10
 Tourism process cycle



Source: González, 2010

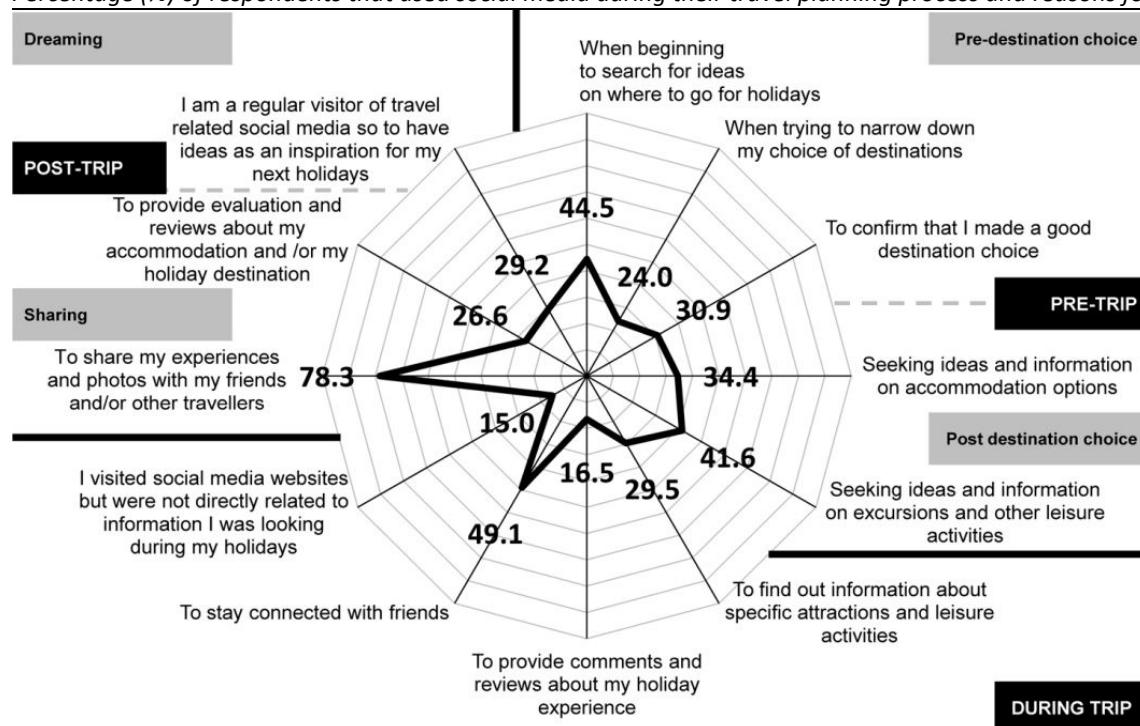
The case of tourist image sharing mimics that of the cycle of tourism planning: the cycle starts with an inspiration phase, then with a planning stage (phase where tourists rely and trust UGC and e-WOM most strongly, thus having a very strong influence on their decisions and behaviour (González, 2010). The study of Fotis et al. (2012) specifically analyses the role and impact of the social media on the whole holiday travel process (before, during and after the trip) and found that the social media are used during all stages of this process, however to a different extent and for different purposes.

In the planning stage, tourists search for UGC information and come into contact with UGC images, thus incorporating this information into their perceived images. Then tourists compare information, make reservations and go on their trip. Finally, in the post-trip phase, these tourists share and transmit several perceived images (embodied in pictures, comments, experiences, etc.), for the circle to restart again. Here, we can see how the image construction circle is closed with 2.0 image online: tourists project certain images which reach other tourists, these tourists at some point may feed back to the circle by posting their perceived images which will instantly become projected, thus closing the circle. The

empirical study of holiday travellers in Former Soviet Union Republics (Fotis et al., 2012) found that social media, such as T-blogs, are predominantly used after holidays for experience sharing, thus closing the tourist image formation cycle in an online user environment through sharing their travel experiences.

Figure 1.11

Percentage (%) of respondents that used social media during their travel planning process and reasons for use



Source: Fotis et al., 2012

This new horizon of tourism “sharing” (with shared experiences and shared images) shows the importance of web 2.0 platforms for the whole tourism cycle today and for image formation. “The fact that some resource, service, destination or tourist brand are not present in this UGC, implies a total invisibility to potential tourists who are going through the inspiration, research and planning phases of their next trip” (González, 2010).

Hence, the focus of DMOs should shift towards this new environment and they should ask themselves: “is my product present within this content generated by users?” if so, “what image is projected through this user-generated content “online”? “How are my tourist resources and services valued?” (González, 2010). These questions are essential during the process of destination choice and decision-making and have strong implications for tourist image perception.

This importance of the presence of UGC online of a destination leads us to introduce the concept of “Internet invisibility” and its risks for services, destinations and tourist brands (González, 2010). The less user generated content is available on a brand, its populations, its contents, resources, etc., the less it is visible, the less impact it has on the inspiration of other potential visitors, the less possible it is for it to be present in the list of decision, the less visits to the territory, etc. all this loop generates even less UGC on the brand online (González, 2010).

At this point, another interesting concept is introduced. González's (2010) report contends that a low volume of content implies "reputation instability", so that few entries or posts online by users condition the 2.0 image which the destination or brand transmits.

All in all, studying online 2.0 image seems fundamental to understanding tourism behaviours and the impact certain images may have on destinations, their cultures and inhabitants. Studying image through web 2.0 platforms becomes essential to study at the same time the perceived image of tourists and the image they are transmitting online. Knowing what is said online about a destination, especially in the social media, is probably what will define this destination in the future.

2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter on Methodology is divided into four sections: case study, database, content analysis, and analysis performance. The first deals with the choice of Catalonia as the case of study, the second justifies the selection of information sources and tourist destinations for the case study (both travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites were chosen), and the methods for selecting, gathering and processing the data sources to be able to extract the relevant information later on. The third section concerns the content analysis technique and its different aspects. The fourth section deals with the analysis performance itself at the different database levels. As an introduction, all parts have a review of previous work.

As Pan et al. (2007) ascertain, “future research needs to explore other frameworks that will be appropriate in maximizing the usefulness of travel blogs to the academe and the industry”. This affirmation is not just valid for travel blogs and reviews but also for official tourism websites and other online media. Therefore the methodology of this study will attempt to build an analysis framework that could be used to analyse the image of other destinations in the future and through different information sources.

2.1. Case study

This section purports to justify the choice of a singular tourist country to analyse the projected and the perceived image of a destination, and to offer relevant data about the destination chosen for later analysis. This research is geographically based and intends to study the tourist image identity of a certain territory. We have observed that the great majority of studies analysing travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites (either separately or at the same time) to extract tourist image or other information, do so for specific geographical areas or destinations. A review of the literature was undertaken to see what places have been analysed and what type of spaces they are (destinations, countries, regions, etc.).

In the case of studies on **travel blogs and reviews**, Pan et al. (2007) studied the city of Charleston, South Carolina; Govers, Go and Kumar (2007a, 2007b) measured destination images as conveyed in narratives of members of three prominent travel web sites of a Middle Eastern destination compared to other worldwide destinations; Carson (2008) studied the image of the Northern Territory in Australia; Wenger (2008) analysed blogs about Austria; Bosangit and Mena (2009) studied the entries of Filipino-Americans’ first visit to the Philippines; Planas (2009) studied the pictures of the city of Girona in travel blogs; González’s (2010) report analysed web 2.0 tourist devices about Catalonia including travel blogs and reviews; Dickinger, Költringer and Körbitz (2011) analysed the image of Tallinn through multiple travel blog hosting websites.

In the case of **official tourism websites** Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) analysed the tourist representation of India through its official tourism website, among other sources; Opoku (2006) and Pitt et al. (2007) analysed website brand communication by several African nations, considering each country a brand; Pitt et al. (2008) analysed the content of

several Central American nations through their official tourism websites; Lepp et al. (2010) did a study of risk perception through the official tourism website of Uganda; Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger (2010) studied a series of cases of official tourism websites: drawing data from tourism websites for the countries of Latvia, Estonia, Jordan, and Myanmar (Burma); the state of Louisiana (USA); the cities of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), New Orleans (USA), Gary (USA); US Sports Halls of Fame; and the fictitious nations of Molvania, Phaic Tan, and San Sombrero; Huertas et al. (2010) made a comparative analysis of Wales and Catalonia country/regional brands, their suprabrands of the states they belong (UK and Spain), and of their capital/regional city brands of Cardiff and Barcelona through official tourism websites; Huertas et al. (2011) analysed websites of several major tourist destination cities in the five continents (such as Barcelona, Madrid, Edinburgh, Amsterdam, Cincinnati, Toronto, Dubai and Hong Kong).

Other studies on image representations that analyse **official tourism websites and travel blogs and/or reviews** at the same time, also focus on specific places or destinations. Choi et al. (2007) analysed the image representations of Macau (China) on the Internet by both official tourism websites (the official tourism website of Macau) and travel blogs, among other sources a research article on blogs about Macau (China); Krizman and Belullo (2007) analysed the online image representations of Istria through a variety of online sources including the official tourism website of Istria and online travel blogs; Chen et al. (2008) analysed the image of Kaohsiung City (Taiwan) through travel blogs and several official tourism websites (such as Kaohsiung City Government, Kaohsiung Walking and Kaohsiung Travel Information); Koerte (2009) conducted a study comparing the representations of Tanzania in its official tourism website and travel blogs.

The majority of studies were based on specific destinations-enclaves, especially cities or states accordingly to the purposes of the study. Only one study was found to analyse a tourist region within multiple states (Krizman & Belullo, 2007) and two were found to analyse countries or regions within states with a distinguished entity as tourist destinations (Huertas et al., 2010; González, 2010). A research gap can be identified in that very few studies have targeted regions as destinations for analysis, probably due to the major difficulty of finding data on them. Moreover, only one of the studies (Huertas et al., 2010) focused on more than one geographical level at the same time (state, country/region and city). Of the studies found about countries or regions within states, none studied at the same time the image of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. We think that the study of countries or regions without state is very interesting for their cultural identity particularities and tourist specificities which are often overlooked by focusing on their states or cities. Therefore this research intends to study the image of a country without state and do so by analysing both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews at the level of the country and at the level of its subregions.

In our case, the area of study chosen is the whole territory of **Catalonia** and the territories of its regional tourist brands. One study, which includes travel blogs and reviews (González, 2010), was found to study the whole area of Catalonia and only one a city within Catalonia: pictures of Girona, within travel blogs (Planas, 2009). Besides, only one piece of research had a region in the Mediterranean area as its area of study (the study on Istria, a region in-between Croatia, Italy and Slovenia) by Krizman and Belullo (2007). No travel blog studies

were found for any other Spanish region or destination either. In the case of official tourism websites, only one (Huertas et al., 2010) was found to analyse the whole area of Catalonia (as well as that of Wales). No comparative study of representations within official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews were found about Catalonia, nor its sub-brand regions. This case study will, therefore, examine in depth not just countries and city destinations, but different sized territories with an entity and a concrete tourist identity. Moreover, none of the studies analysed a mass coastal tourist region of the scope of Catalonia.

Catalonia is a country in the north-eastern Iberian Peninsula that covers an area of 32,107 km² and has 7.5 million inhabitants. Its capital is Barcelona. Catalonia is a very interesting case of study for several reasons:

In tourist terms, Catalonia is a first-order world tourist destination, especially in terms of sun and sea tourism, and the second top tourist region in the EU-27 as indicated by Eurostat: “with 63.6 million overnight stays, the Ile-de-France region, which includes the French capital Paris, was well in the lead, followed by three Spanish regions: Catalonia (54.1 million), ...” (Eurostat regional yearbook 2011: top 20 tourist regions in the EU-27). Catalonia offers many attractions for all sorts of visitors: culture, relaxation, nature, family holidays, sports, business, etc. Its great capacities and excellent facilities place it among Europe’s prime tourist areas (Catalan Tourist Board, 2012). Catalonia receives huge numbers of tourists every year and at the end of December 2009 accommodated 282,126 hotel beds and 229,126 places in campsites (RTC: *Registre de Turisme de Catalunya*, 2010; the Tourism Register of Catalonia) and is situated in one of the most touristy regions on the planet: the Mediterranean Euroregion which is spread through Spain and France (the two most touristy states in the world according to the World Tourism Organization). In spite of the global economic crisis which has reduced the number of foreign tourists, in 2009 a total of 7,798,000 visitors stayed in Catalan hotels, 945,000 in campsites and 4,854,000 in other establishments (IDESCAT: Statistical Institute of Catalonia). In 2010, foreign tourists (staying overnight) represented a total of more than 14 million tourists in Catalonia. Moreover, if counting all tourists (foreign, Spanish and Catalan) in 2010 according to data of Frontur and Familitur (Spanish Tourism Studies Institute), a total of 34,323,000 tourists visited Catalonia resulting in 178,116,000 overnight stays.

The capital of Catalonia, Barcelona, is one of the most touristy cities in Europe and is placed among the top capitals in the European ranking of tourist capitals. According to the data provided by Barcelona Tourism (the tourist organization of Barcelona) it is the sixth European capital in total number of tourists with a total increase in tourists of 30.65% from 2005 to 2011, it is the fourth capital in Europe for number of international tourists, with an increase of 44.36% from 2005 to 2011, the biggest increase with difference among the top five capitals (“*Tourism statistics for Barcelona and province 2011*”). Moreover, Barcelona is the only city in the world with nine buildings which are UNESCO World Heritage sites (Barcelona Tourism Consortium Press File, 2012), rendering it unique.

In cultural terms, Catalonia has its own history, language (Catalan) and a distinct cultural, political and legal tradition which have shaped the personality of the country and the people. Nowadays, Catalonia is an autonomous community within Spain with a government

of its own known as the Generalitat. Catalonia is currently engaged in complex processes of identity reaffirmation and nationalism which aim to detach Catalonia from the Spanish state in many ways, including tourist image and cultural identity. Issues concerning the identity shown to foreigners, the issue of Catalan vs. Spanish cultural identity, the creation of a Catalan tourist brand distinct from the Spanish one are very vivid. No other studies have analysed travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites to reveal cultural identity issues. Therefore, in terms of the study of cultural identity, this case is very interesting as different identity backgrounds coexist and struggle to become dominant in the territory (Mariné-Roig, 2011b).

Figure 2.1

Map of Catalonia made up of nine tourist brands gathered under and promoted by tourist boards



Source: Press Pack 2012 (Catalan Tourist Board. Government of Catalonia)

In tourist terms, Catalonia is a tourist brand of its own. Indeed the Catalonia brand is well promoted by local authorities on its own and also serves as an umbrella brand for the

geographically minor brands within Catalonia. Catalonia as a territory is divided into nine regional brands. However, tourist flows are not equally distributed among the brands, resulting in higher arrivals of foreign tourists in the capital region (Barcelona) and the coastal brands (Costa Daurada, Costa Brava and Costa Barcelona) (see Table 2.1). The rest of the brands receive very few foreign tourists in comparison.

Table 2.1
Distribution of foreign tourists (thousands) per Catalan brands

Year	Barna	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	CatCe	Pyren	tLlei
2004	4,304	1,584	4,672	1,722	313	354	107
2005	4,776	1,619	5,304	2,056	321	414	131
2006	5,385	1,741	5,358	2,372	366	443	118
2007	5,625	1,807	5,436	2,222	379	315	131
2008	5,577	1,752	4,710	2,182	361	298	134
2009	5,479	1,764	3,874	1,766	354	251	106
2010	6,603	1,738	3,545	1,652	323	231	90
2011	7,634	1,902	3,154	1,505	373	157	64
%	38.8	11.9	30.8	13.2	2.4	2.1	0.8

Source: *Trends in the main tourism magnitudes (Catalan Tourism Observatory)*

This unequal distribution of tourists is also reflected in the tourist infrastructure. The top destinations of Catalonia in terms of accommodation places are led by Barcelona, the capital. Then come other destinations which are located in three major coastal brands, highly specialized in sun, sea and sand tourism. These brands are Costa Daurada, Costa Brava and Costa Barcelona. An example of these top destinations are Salou (Costa Daurada), Lloret de Mar (Costa Brava) and Calella (Costa Barcelona) (see Table 2.2).

It is remarkable that the largest accommodation structures are concentrated along Catalonia's 580 km of coastline.

Table 2.2
Destinations with over 5,000 hotel places or 10,000 campsite places in 2011

Town	Tourist brand	Campsites	Places	Hotels	Places	Sum
Barcelona/e	Barcelona	0	0	542	63,761	63,761
Salou	Costa Daurada	3	6,408	71	31,991	38,399
Lloret de Mar	Costa Brava	4	4,104	127	29,947	34,051
Calella	Costa Barcelona	3	2,226	51	11,448	13,674
Santa Susanna	Costa Barcelona	3	3,072	20	9,681	12,753
Tossa de Mar	Costa Brava	5	7,863	64	7,563	15,426
Roses	Costa Brava	4	2,520	47	6,767	9,287
Malgrat de Mar	Costa Barcelona	8	4,416	24	6,141	10,557
Cambrils	Costa Daurada	6	10,149	28	5,496	15,645
Castell-Platja d'Aro	Costa Brava	6	11,634	34	4,414	16,048
Blanes	Costa Brava	12	11,169	21	3,685	14,854
Torroella de Montgrí	Costa Brava	10	15,276	20	1,713	16,989
Mont-roig del Camp	Costa Daurada	7	14,010	11	1,030	15,040
Sant Pere Pescador	Costa Brava	7	13,941	4	134	14,075










Source: *Idescat (Local tourism infrastructure)*. <http://www.idescat.cat/en/economia/ecotur.html>

In this case the nationalities that have most visited Catalonia since 2004 are the French, always in the first place, then British tourists in second place, followed by the group of Netherlands and Belgians in third place, and Germans in fourth place (See Table 2.3)

In percentages, the main countries of origin of visitors to Catalonia over the last eight years (Catalan Tourism Observatory (<http://www.gencat.cat/temes/eng/turisme.htm>): trends in the main tourism magnitudes,) have been France (26%), the UK (13%), Benelux (10%), Germany (9%), Italy (8%), the USA (4%), Switzerland (2%), Russia (2%) and Japan (1%) for a total yearly average of about 14,667,750 tourists.

Table 2.3.

Foreign tourists (thousands) in Catalonia

Year	 ch	 de	 fr	 it	 jp	 nl+be	 ru	 uk	 us	Other	Total
2004	340	1,353	3,427	1,025	154	1,453	132	2,175	435	2,676	13,170
2005	328	1,427	3,966	1,064	114	1,497	146	2,330	458	3,332	14,662
2006	326	1,487	4,180	1,341	159	1,542	225	2,244	516	3,790	15,810
2007	331	1,440	4,332	1,283	155	1,473	255	2,158	549	3,916	15,892
2008	327	1,393	3,802	1,138	155	1,400	294	2,029	552	3,937	15,027
2009	290	1,212	3,453	998	154	1,343	238	1,686	648	3,575	13,597
2010	304	1,152	3,526	1,034	173	1,325	389	1,464	739	4,101	14,207
2011	350	1,257	3,614	1,050	169	1,382	560	1,343	695	4,549	14,969

Source: *Trends in the main tourism magnitudes (Catalan Tourism Observatory)*

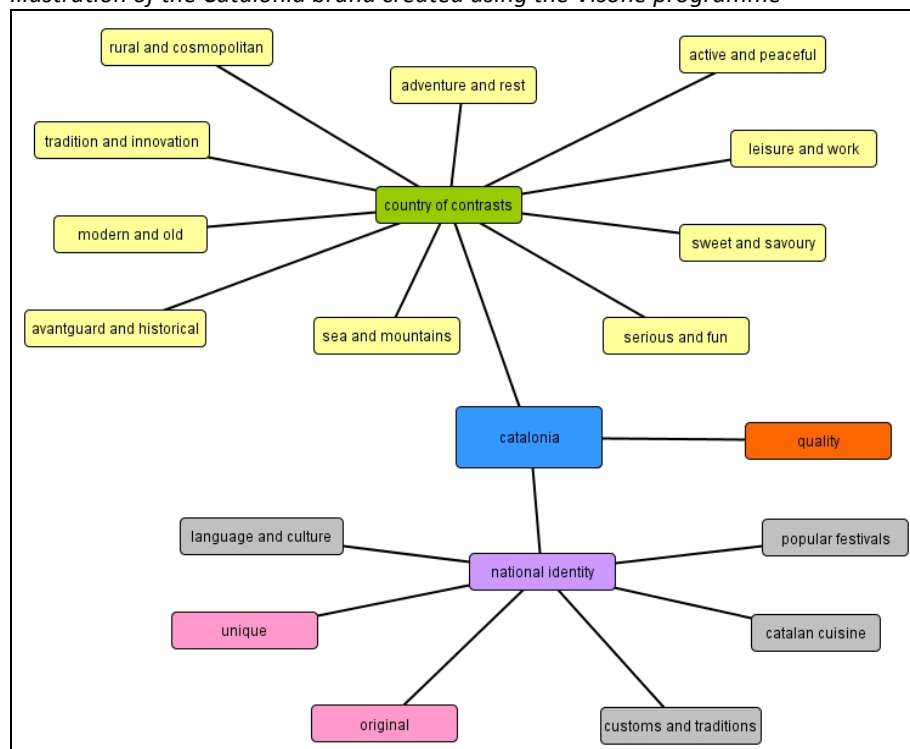
González's (2010) report about user-generated content in web 2.0 concerning tourism in Catalonia found several interesting results that were considered in the present research. The Report found that in general there is a good volume of user-generated content "online" about Catalonia and Catalan destinations. They also found an important concentration of conversations relative to Barcelona (about 70-75% in blogs and forums). They observed that many sub-regional Catalan tourist brands were invisible (given that their municipalities were barely represented in users' conversations; this was the case of Val d'Aran, Terres de l'Ebre, Terres de Lleida, Catalunya Central and Pirineus) and many of the top municipalities within the tourist brands were also invisible (as the ten municipalities with most references account for about 85-95% of forum and travel blog contents). Besides, many brands and destinations in Catalonia had a very low volume of online content generated by users. As previously explained, this implies online invisibility and reputation instability. The report points out that it is these brands and territories that must work hard to break down this invisibility and instability. They found there is an important concentration of Anglo-Saxon users in volume of opinions and world visibility. They observed a high growth of user-generated content about Catalonia in TripAdvisor.com. According to the report there is a high occurrence of conversations about Accommodation and Transport and a low presence of gastronomy.

Among the recommendations González's (2010) report makes to Catalan DMOs and researchers is to conduct content analysis studies, apart from the quantifications of the Report, which shed light on the positive and negative opinions of users and their motivations.

Huertas et al. (2010) focus on an in-depth, comparative analysis of the Wales and Catalonia destination brands in order to explore the relationships between these country/regional brands, their suprabrands of the UK and Spain and their capital/regional city brands of Cardiff and Barcelona. The authors presented a conceptual illustration of the Catalonia brand (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2

Illustration of the Catalonia brand created using the Visone programme



Source: Huertas et al. (2010)

2.2. Database

This thesis is based on data obtained mainly from the Internet. Akehurst (2008) asserts that information available on the Internet is accurate, up-to-date and usable, and furthermore it is useful both to inform tourists about travel and to enable tourist public organizations to make important marketing decisions. However, we have observed that plenty of valuable information is still not easily usable and understandable for tourism research and policy and decision-making, and is not prepared for computerized analyses to be performed on it. This is especially true for Web 2.0 and, within them travel blogs and reviews.

Hence, this section explains the process of obtaining a suitable database to analyse the tourist image of a destination from online sources. It deals with the selection of data sources, data collection, download, arrangement, cleaning, debug, language, mining and dissemination. All these steps are divided between the official tourism websites that, in principle, project the destination image and websites hosting travel blogs and reviews which contain the tourists' perceived-transmitted images.

2.2.1 Data sources

The first step of the methodology was to select the online data sources for analysis. Chen (2011) states that the whole domestic online tourism market has progressively subdivided into "hotel and airline travel supplier's online business, third-party online tourism service, traditional tourism services online business, online tourism search engines, online tourism

community or platform, etc.". As Law, Qi and Buhalis (2010) explain, tourism website evaluation studies have been categorized into nine main categories: hospitality websites; destination websites such as destination marketing organization websites (DMOs) and official tourism websites (OTWs); travel supplier websites; airline websites; travel search engine websites; travel blogs; online travel guides; online travel magazines; and travel websites. Later studies focusing on user-generated travel reviews such as Whitehead (2011), who identified future research opportunities for using online travel reviews websites, could be added to the category of travel blogs.

Some authors consider just one type of tourism website. These are the cases of Law (2010) who analyses available functions and services of an online travel guide; Bingley, Burgess, Sellitto, Cox and Buultjens (2010) who classify tourism Web 2.0 websites; Hashim, Scaglione and Murphy (2012) who draw upon diffusion modelling to examine hospitality website adoption; and Bhat (2012) who studies the development of the OTW of a national tourism organization (NTO).

However, OTWs are often chosen as sources of projected image when aiming to study the image of a tourist destination. For example, Choi et al. (2007), as well as Krizman and Belullo (2007), attempted to identify image representations on the Internet by analysing official tourism websites, tour operators' and travel agents' websites, online travel magazine and guide websites, and online travel blogs; Pitt et al. (2008) only analysed official government tourism websites to study website communication, but they believed extending the study to include blogs, online guides, and message boards would prove interesting; Chen et al. (2008) discovered image perception gaps between tourists and government by comparisons of the results from domestic and foreign tourist blogs, and official websites; and Koerte (2009) analysed national tourism websites and travel blogs found on TravelPod.com to determine the congruency of projected and perceived images.

Projected tourist image, as previously explained, can be found in multiple online sources of information (in tourism magazines, travel agencies around the world, online brochures and guidebooks, etc.), but the information used in this study is that available on the official tourism websites which are more homogeneous and easier to determine. Perceived-transmitted image was obtained from travel blogs and user-generated travel reviews located on some websites hosting travel blogs and reviews. To contrast some results, official statistics downloaded from the web were used.

2.2.1.1 Official tourism websites

Official tourism websites were targeted among the different online sources of tourist information to extract projected tourist image and to be compared with the travellers' perceived and transmitted image.

We chose official tourism websites because they are the representatives of the governmental or official tourism organizations of destinations, in many cases they are seen as the legitimate representatives of place image and identity online. Moreover, the images on these sites are in a way how the destination portrays itself and are among the more distant sources of information from the tourist and the least influential according to Gartner's (1993) classification. These sources have certain analytical advantages over the

other websites because their origin is very specific and image within these websites is highly suitable for study and comparison as these websites are very homogeneous and easy to determine when compared to other commercial sites. Likewise, their content is homogeneous and geo-centred in specific destinations (organized by territories, brands, cities, etc.).

To select the official tourism websites of study, first, former works were consulted to see how and what type of websites were selected. Most of the studies targeting official tourism websites selected the state official tourism websites of the countries they studied, which were usually one website (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Opoku, 2006; Choi et al., 2007; Pitt et al., 2007; Pitt et al., 2008; Lepp et al. 2010; Hallett & Kaplan-Weigner, 2010); or two (Koerte, 2009); the official tourism website of the region they studied (Krizman & Belullo, 2007); or the official website/s of the city or cities studied (Choi et al., 2007; Chen et al. 2008; Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009; Hallett & Kaplan-Weigner, 2010; Huertas et al., 2011). Only one study gathered multiple levels of websites (state, region and town) to study a country/region (Huertas et al., 2010).

Most of the studies, selected purposeful samples of official websites for the cases of study, according to certain criteria as, for example, the selection of 40 cities which were major tourist hubs in the five continents taking into account the World's Top Tourism destinations according to the WTO, the number of visitors and the importance of the city as a tourist destination (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009). Only one study (Pitt et al., 2007) had undertaken a general-random search for African state tourism websites and then excluded the non-English and non-functioning ones from the sample.

The present research is territorially based on a case study and therefore the websites chosen on purpose. We aim to analyse the official image of the case study, Catalonia (a region without state) at different geographical levels. Therefore, the websites chosen for analysis were the parts of the state website referring to the region of study, the regional official tourism website, and the sub-regional official tourism websites which correspond to sub-brand territories. The search and location of these state, regional and sub-regional websites was conducted through web search engines (to see the selected Official Tourism Websites go to section 3.1.1.1.).

2.2.1.2. Specialized websites hosting travel blogs and reviews

A major problem when analysing travel blogs is "how to identify all the relevant utterances done by bloggers and forum writers all over the world. As the social Web rapidly expands day by day, this is not a really easy task, especially when one has to check the community sites manually" (Waldhör, 2007). Other authors such as Carson (2008), Akehurst (2008) also manifest the difficulties in locating the targeted travel blogs.

Acknowledging the possible difficulties in identifying the relevant blogs for study, at first, the issue of where to locate them, was considered. It was observed that travel blogs may be located as individual (isolated) online devices or be located within specialized websites hosting travel blogs. Individual blogs usually consist of several entries (separate posts of information) posted by the same author/s. Within travel blog hosting websites the disposition of information is similar (by entries as separate posts of information), but posts

do not belong to the same author, but to multiple authors. The information there is not ordered by author but by other criteria (entries are mainly classified by date and geographical region or destination). Therefore, in these spaces the units of information are blog entries or posts written by different author/s in the same online space. Each of these entries has a separate entity (can be accessed and commented on its own) and URL. One same author can create one or several posts.

In the first case (individual blogs), relevant blogs are usually sought through general search engines with search words such as “travel”, “blog”, “name of destination”, etc. In the second case (blogs within specialized websites), travel blogs about a specific destination are located through the search paths and tools within the specialized websites. For example: Continent - State - Region.

Lin and Huang (2006), for instance, analysed an individual travel blog site and its effects in popularizing a destination among the Taiwanese public. Some authors such as Pan et al. (2007) and Volo (2010b) combined both the search of travel blogs related to a specific destination through general search engines (such as Google) and the search within popular travel blog sites. However, looking for individual travel blogs seems to be difficult and time-consuming; Carson (2008), for instance, asserts that blog retrieval through general blog search engines returns results with a lot of ‘noise’. In the author’s case, to locate 99 relevant blogs more than 2000 links had to be checked as commercial or news feeds produced a lot of ‘noise’ among results. According to the author, in the future of blog analysis, strategies must be found to reduce ‘noise’. Therefore, it seems that retrieving individual travel blogs presents several disadvantages, especially that of ‘imprecision’ and of ‘noise’ retrieval. Other authors, such as Chen et al. (2008) get the blogs from both specialized and non-specialized sites hosting travel blogs.

In spite of that, due to the great amount of data and the difficulty in finding appropriate information for analysis within the vast amount of online sites, it has been observed that the majority of studies on travel blogs analyse (mainly or completely) travel blogs located on specialized hosting websites (these are, among others, Gruber, 2007; Pan et al., 2007; Carson, 2008; Dippelreiter et al., 2008; Mack et al., 2008; Pühringer & Taylor, 2008; Wenger, 2008; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Bosangit et al., 2009; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Koerte, 2009; Planas, 2009; Vrana et al., 2009; Volo, 2010b; Vrana & Zafiroopoulos, 2010).

Many public travel blog sites have specialized in hosting individual travel blogs (Schmallegger and Carson, 2008). On these websites, users create one or more blog entries about their trips. Travel blog websites offer worldwide access to people looking to share information with others about their travel experiences (Banyai & Glover, 2011). As previously explained, blogs located on travel blog hosting websites are rapidly expanding with thousands of publications and new members every day, gaining dominant weight in travel blog publication. “Millions of individuals have joined travel blog websites that enable them to post stories, pictures and videos of their travel experiences” (Bosangit et al., 2009). These sites can also be called tourism-specific provider sites (Pühringer & Taylor, 2008).

As an example, Law (2009) describes the characteristics and services of the site Travelblog.org, which could probably apply to many travel blog hosting websites: 1. Blog

posting and information dissemination, 2. Online forums and discussion (as the aim of the site is to become a community network site), 3. Others (usually third party offers to obtain funding, tips, photo competitions, etc.). In the case of Travelblog.org, blogs are usually automatically stored according to geographical regions. Law (2009) describes Travelblog.org as having a “text-based nature”, although many images exist too. Their text-based nature helps towards quick surfing and content loading and downloading.

These important websites hosting travel blogs can be publicly-open sites exclusively dedicated to hosting travel blogs such as travelblog.org, travelpod.com, blog.realtravel.com, yourtraveljournal.com or travelpost.com (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). They can be virtual travel communities (e.g. realtravel.com, igougo.com, travelpod.com or virtualtourist.com) or specialized customer review sites (tripadvisor.com, holidaycheck.com or cosmotourist.de). They may also be commercial sites and belong to travel-related companies, such as travel agencies (statravelblogs.com, tui.com) or well-known travel guides (lonelyplanet.com, community.roughguides.com, frommers.com), provide free web space to tourists to publish their travel stories (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). In the present study, only specialized websites mainly dedicated to hosting travel blogs and reviews, were considered. This research aims to analyse tourism experiences in a broad sense. Thus, websites offering travel blog and review spaces oriented to explaining tourist experiences were considered; other websites solely oriented to product reviews and recommendations, or with solely commercial purposes were not considered.

These specialized websites are probably the most interesting to extract data and information since they host thousands of individual entries, usually geographically classified (according to the destination), of which we can know precisely the place they are referring to. This characteristic (geographical classification) is very important to locate blogs on a specific destination or region and also to classify, discern and download information. Moreover, the information there is temporally classified (you know when the blog has been created and when the trip happened). These websites have clear advantages for blog mining and analysis as they concentrate thousands of blogs whose subject is travel and tourism experiences. One key aspect of travel blog and review websites is that they enable downloading hundreds of blog contents semi-automatically, which represents a great advantage when compared to individual blogs. Furthermore the information they contain is usually public, freely accessed and available. It is on these specialized sites that potentially communities of bloggers interested in travel are formed, and that interactivity and feedback are bigger. For all of these reasons blogs and reviews located within these specialized hosting websites were targeted.

Once travel blog and review hosting websites were chosen as a target for study we proceeded to choose the most suitable websites for the analysis of Catalonia. For this purpose, an exhaustive search process of travel blog and review hosting websites was performed. This process responds to an observed weakness in the tourism literature. Objective procedures to select the travel blog hosting websites for analysis are missing in many cases. Some researchers provide some tools and criteria to choose the analysed websites (these methods have been gathered in the website search process of this research), however, much research does not justify at all why some pages have been chosen or take a site’s popularity for granted without providing any data about it; therefore, case

studies based on certain websites lack objective data to corroborate the relevance, popularity, audience, etc. of the pages in relation to their research goal.

The process we propose for searching travel blog websites is partly based on former works. By merging different search techniques, this study provides a reliable process to search relevant travel blog hosting websites for a specific destination. The process follows several steps: browsing former works, bibliographical sources, subject guides, blog search engines and search and meta-search engines.

Former works were consulted and the most common travel blog websites analysed by other authors were noted. These are: Travelpod.com (Pan et al., 2007; Carson, 2008; Dippelreiter et al., 2008; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al., 2009; Koerte, 2009; Vrana et al., 2009; Vrana & Zafiropoulos, 2010; Dickinger et al., 2011), Travelblog.org (Pan et al., 2007; Carson, 2008; Cox et al. 2008a,b; Dippelreiter et al., 2008; Wenger, 2008; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al. 2009; Volo, 2010b; Dickinger et al., 2011), Travelpost.com (Pan et al., 2007; Volo, 2010b), Virtualtourist.com (Cox et al. 2008a,b; Dippelreiter et al., 2008; Planas, 2009; Dickinger et al., 2011), Realtravel.com (Gruber, 2007; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Dicking, 2011), Travbuddy.com (Cox et al. 2008a,b; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Bosangit et al., 2009; Dickinger et al., 2011) and Travellerspoint.com (Carson, 2008). Other sites mentioned hosting travel blogs are worldnomads.com, mego.to (Carson, 2008), Travelblogs.com, Traveljournals.com, Mytripjournal.com, 43places.com (Dickinger et al., 2011). There are other blogs on travel experiences that may be posted on diary-like websites such as livejournal.com or bloggerspot.com (Bosangit & Mena, 2009) and TripsLog.com (Cox et al. 2008a,b). Among travel reviews TripAdvisor.com has been studied by Miguéns, Baggio and Costa (2008); Cox et al. (2008a,b); Akehurst (2008); O'Connor (2010); Stangl (2010); Kane (2011); Dickinger et al. (2011), among others. Cox et al. (2008a,b) found that TripAdvisor.com is the most popular UGC site for travellers.

An additional **bibliographical source** consulted was Google scholar (scholar.google.com).

Subject guides were browsed. These were Technorati (<http://technorati.com/blogs/directory/living/travel/>) which is the leading blog search engine and directory indexing more than a million blogs, and Intute-Travel and Tourism (<http://www.intute.ac.uk/travel/>) created by a consortium of seven universities for research and study purposes. Choi et al. (2007) and Krizman and Belullo (2007) first searched the lists under travel directories (mainly Yahoo and Google) and afterwards visited a number of related websites using keywords such as "travelogues", "travel writing", "travel agents", etc.

Different **blog search engines** were used with different utilities and databases to look for blogs. These were BlogDigger.com, BlogSearch.Google.com, BlogSearchEngine.com and IceRocket.com. Sharda and Ponnada (2008) used three different blog search engines to locate relevant travel blog sites: BlogSearch.Google.com, BlogSearchEngine.com and IceRocket.com.

Finally **standard search engines** (Yahoo, Google) and **metasearch engines** (MetaCrawler, AllPlus) were employed to search for blogs by using related keywords in English and French. These two languages were chosen because according to official statistics of tourism in Catalonia, the majority of foreign tourists are English or French speakers.

The Keywords used in English were: travel blog, travel review, travel journal, travel diary, trip blog, trip journal, trip diary, travelogue, travel stories, travel buddies, travel community, and travel forum. Pan et al. (2007) and Bosangit and Mena (2009) used Google's tools to obtain the most popular or visited websites using the keywords "travel blog/s". We also wanted to note that according to Stangl (2010) the words "travel blog" and "travelblogs" are the ones with the highest volume of searches when compared to the words "trip" or "holiday", or to the terms "journal" or "diary"; the aggregated search volume for the terms 'travel blog' and 'travelblog' nearly doubled in the course of time.

The keywords used in French were: travel blog, *blog de voyage*, *récit de voyage*, *carnet de voyage*, *amis voyageurs*, *communauté de voyageurs*, and *forum de voyage*.

Once the possible travel blog websites of study were identified through the process described above, the most relevant and suitable websites were selected according to the following **criterion**: The presence of blogs or reviews about the case study should be significant (more than 100 entries on the same website). (To see the Travel blog and review hosting websites chosen go to section 3.1.1.2.).

Having chosen the websites, in the case of travel blog and review websites it is interesting to gather **General information about them** including domain information collected through the WHOIS protocol: name, IP, registrant city, date of creation and official language of the website. Therefore this information was collected for the websites. The registrant city of the site is interesting as it might be related to the member's country of origin.

2.2.2 Data collection

Analyses of visual material such as websites are highly problematic because issues of 'representation', 'interpretation' and 'sampling' are all highly contested in visual research (Huertas et al., 2010). Travel blog and review sampling and collection, especially, has been an arduous task for researchers studying these devices, and one that has been mostly done manually. Most studies opt for a purposive sampling of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews according to their research goals. As Opoku (2006) explains, purposive sampling of websites enables the use of judgment in selecting cases that researchers believe would best help to answer the research questions and to meet objectives.

In the case of studies on travel blogs and reviews, the majority of authors collect small samples of travel blogs, usually not surpassing 40 travel blogs: Choi et al. (2007) studied 14 travel blogs among other Internet devices. Bosangit & Mena (2009) analysed 10 travel blogs, Carson (2008) analyzed 25 travel blogs, Bosangit et al. (2009) 30 travel blogs, Planas (2009) analysed photographs of 30 individual bloggers, Pan et al. (2007) studied 40 travel blogs. Some other authors study wider samples of more than 100: Wenger (2008) analysed 188 travel blog entries. When travel reviews are analysed (on their own or with travel blogs) samples are bigger: Dickinger et al. (2011) gathered 1976 relevant travel blogs and reviews, Miguéns et al. (2008) gathered an average of 32 reviews per 191 hotels (which is 6112 reviews).

Authors who analysed official tourism websites collected the following samples: Pitt et al. (2007) and Opoku (2006) 10 official websites of 10 different countries; Pitt et al. (2008) 7

official tourism websites of 7 different countries; Hallet and Kaplan-Weinger (2010) studied multiple official websites of at least 4 countries, one USA state, 3 cities and 3 fictitious states, among others; Huertas et al. (2011) 40 city official tourism websites; Lepp et al. (2010) one official tourism website of the country of study; Huertas et al. (2010) 6 official tourism websites (2 states, 2 regions and 2 cities). Within these websites usually multiple files and pages are analysed.

Studies working at the same time with official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews gathered the following samples: Krizman and Belullo (2007) collected 39 websites about tourism in Istria of which one was the official tourism website and nine travel blogs. Chen et al. (2008) collected 232 blog articles and 106 documents of official tourism information from several official tourism websites from October 2006 to April 2007; Koerte (2009) analysed 364 blogs from 2003 to 2008 and the information within the two main national tourism websites of the country of study, the latter being the biggest sample of travel blogs analysed.

However, these small samples, especially in the case of travel blogs, may seem insufficient within the large quantities of UGC online to get a deep insight into the different existing images within travel blogs and reviews about a specific destination and to infer more general results. We believe, ideally, in quantitative analyses that the best option would be to gather the largest sample of travel blogs possible about a specific destination from diverse travel blog and review sources. In this case, we are speaking of retrieving thousands of blogs from travel blog and review hosting websites. This aspect of travel blog sampling should be improved to allow the gathering of larger quantities of blogs which better reflect the existing large quantity of information and the great diversity of users. In the case of official tourism websites, all the contents (files, webpages) of the targeted website should be included, however very few researchers specify what documents and pages of the websites are the ones analysed (considering that official tourism websites contain large amounts of information in multiple sections).

Besides, as observed, the majority of studies analysing the content of travel blogs and reviews and of official tourism websites perform a manual or semi-manual collection of data, in a way similar to copy-pasting information (e.g. Pitt et al. 2008; Chen et al. 2008; Koerte, 2009). For example if the text of blogs is to be analysed by specialized software, most researchers select the text in the blog, copy it and paste it into the software interface. This type of manual processes are highly time-consuming and becomes impractical (or unfeasible) when dealing with large numbers of entries or webpages. In fact, we think this is one of the main reasons why samples of travel blogs have been so small, rarely surpassing 100 entries.

The best option to gather a large number of blogs or websites in a way that they can later be automatically analysed or modified, is to download the information to the PC. Although downloading website pages can be quite a simple process (they can be downloaded through Internet browsers or specialized programmes) very few studies on travel blogs have been found to specify this process. Exceptions are Govers (2005), who used a basic tool to download twenty websites to a hard-disk, using the Microsoft Internet Explorer's "Offline Web Pages" tool. Other authors have downloaded travel blogs but do not specify how. This

is the case of Pan et al. (2007) who acknowledge that blogs can be manually or automatically downloaded, aggregated and analysed; and of Li and Wang (2011) and Bosangit et al. (2009) who have downloaded travel blogs but do not specify through which device.

If only a few pages have to be studied, probably in qualitative studies, they can be downloaded manually through Web browsers (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, etc.). However, if samples are large, specialized programmes called offline browsers are needed to download the webpages. Downloading webpages through offline browsers is a time-saving option, as technology today permits collecting large samples of t-blogs (or website information), much quicker than the manual option. It is especially recommendable for later quantitative analyses. Indeed, downloading the entries is a necessary step, especially for quantitative analysis of html files and for travel blog website analysis applied to a specific case study. One very practical and useful advantage of downloading data to the computer is that, due to the variability and constant change of web 2.0 information, it provides a snapshot of all the information that will not change every day.

Another important issue concerning data collection is that of the temporal span of the blogs gathered, as very often the blogging activity goes on for long periods of time. Furthermore, “the repeated observation of a sample of travel blogs over an extended period of time provides the opportunity to assess the effect of time on tourists’ identities, perceptions, and impressions of the tourism products and experiences”. In this regard, we observed that some authors (Bosangit et al., 2009) use the latest travel blogs posted for analysis, analysing the last ten posted blogs of three different travel blog hosting websites. However, the observation of the latest blogs may be insufficient to assess the user-generated image of a destination. In this sense, we decided that the best option was to gather as many travel blogs as possible about a specific destination ranging from the beginning of blog posting (about 10-15 years ago) until today. This would also enable temporal and evolutionary analyses in future studies.

A fundamental point of this research is that it intends to gather the whole existing body of travel blogs about the case study since their first posting until a certain date. In this respect, it must be noted that the manual collection of information (copy & paste) is unfeasible for our case study for several reasons:

- Data loss as file name, or webpage title which is the weightiest item for search engines
- Difficult to copy due to inline frames and advertisements (ads) interspersed
- Highly voluminous information as more than 100,000 HTML pages have to be processed.

Therefore, automatized procedures had to be sought. Nanba et al. (2009) proposed an automatic compilation of travel information from travel blogs through certain location-name and local-product pairs, and proved that travel blogs are a useful information source for the extraction of travel information. However, we consider that it is difficult to identify the keyword pairs they used as seed. On the other hand, as we shall see later, bloggers do not follow any rule when writing travel diaries and make many mistakes and misspellings when they write the names of local products and destinations.

Johnson et al. (2011) proposed automated web harvesting to collect user-generated content for tourism and apply the software on a website hosting travel reviews to gather information

about a tourist destination. One of the problems with automation is that it produces reviews about other destinations because, for example, the user is from these other destinations and the word appears in his/her review. In this case, manual editing to remove these reviews is required. These authors work with a sample of about 6,000 reviews and in our case study we processed more than 100,000 entries.

For these reasons collecting from websites had to be mechanized through offline browsers or website copiers, to be able later to computerise the information with offline utilities and programmes. In our case, we used Offline Explorer Enterprise (OEE) (see Annex A.2. Applications, Offline Explorer Enterprise; see also section 3.1.2).

2.2.3. Data download

Gruber (2007) stressed that information within travel blogs is not always well structured, neither follows the same pattern among different websites, sometimes not even within the same website. Most blogs present information in a discrete manner (Sharda & Ponnada, 2008). Sometimes researchers have “a number of issues in locating” specific destination blogs (Carson 2008). Furthermore, “most current blogs, in general, and tourism blogs in particular, do not incorporate the ability to be searched effectively, as these are created with inadequate metadata; and appropriate metadata is the key to effective Semantic Search” (Sharda & Ponnada, 2008). According to Gruber (2007), these problems related to structure could be solved by moving towards integrated systems of collective intelligence as “correlated with the degree of structure are the expressive power of the knowledge representation used and the cost to develop and maintain the knowledge base” (Gruber 2007).

In a first phase, we performed a **manual exploration** of the websites to see their structure and the location of the HTML files relative to the case study.

The official tourism websites mainly have a thematic classification of content such as Culture, Gastronomy, Routes, etc., within more generic levels such as What to do, Where to go, What’s on, etc., which refer to the attraction factors of the multiple destinations of the country, region or tourism brand they represent. However, it is almost impossible to classify the information at a geographical level by towns. Pitt et al. (2007), for example, analysed data derived from the websites’ main portals and four levels down in the hierarchy of information. Pitt et al. (2008) went further and downloaded all the information for all levels within the sole website hierarchy so that all available text from the domain name was obtained. In our case, all the contents of the websites referring to the case study were analysed at all possible levels within the website.

By contrast, the majority of websites hosting travel blogs and reviews have a geographic classification of content (State, Region and/or Town). When the region is not present, we must work directly with cities or towns. In this case, if the website provides a list of the towns with entries, it is only necessary to select those belonging to the studied region. If it does not, a list of the main tourist destinations of the region must be made. In our case study we considered as main tourist destinations those with over 5,000 hotel beds or 10,000 campsite places.

The websites under study mainly present two types of navigation structures:

- Hierarchical site structure:

Some websites adopt a form of tree or multitiered hierarchical architecture, for example, from a region we can navigate to its cities or towns and vice-versa. The simplest case to download is when all files are stored in hierarchically arranged folders, such as /Continent/State/Region/Town/. In this case, the files can be downloaded with no limit of levels with the OEE option: "Load files only within the starting directory (Region) and below (towns)". Otherwise, we must locate the webpages with the corresponding links index and download them with the OEE Level 1 option (number of levels deep to process).

- Site search as navigation:

Other websites do not have the sequential menus to get to the subject or destination webpages, so we must introduce a keyword in the search or advanced search text box to get the webpages with the corresponding links index. To be able to automatize the search we must know the parameters that the text box sends in each case (ASP/ASPX: Active Server Pages; CFM: ColdFusion Markup Language; PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor; etc.) to get the dynamic pages and thus, be able to prepare the URLs that must be inserted in the web copier. An example of PHP parameters could be:

`http://...php?action=search&term=Barcelona&table=diary&docIndex={:0..1540|20}`

The OEE macro ({:0..1540|20}) would generate the numerical series 0, 20, 40, 60, ... 1540 and OEE would download 78 pages with 20 link entries each. With the OEE option Level 1, OEE would download the 1,560 diary pages about Barcelona in addition to that.

One problem found with the site search was the homonyms; for example, Barcelona in addition to being the capital city of Catalonia, is the capital city of Anzoategui State, and a municipality, a town, a settlement, a hamlet, etc. in other countries (Wikipedia disambiguation).

2.2.4. Data arrangement

After data download comes the step of data arrangement. Data arrangement consists of the construction of a folders' and files' structure which enables the classification of webpages according to different concepts. In the case of the travel blog and review entries, the following format has been adopted:

`root\website\brand\town\entrydate_pagename[_ending].htm`

- Website: two-letters particular acronym
- Brand: five-letters particular acronym
- Town: if nouns are composite they are joined by a dash
- Entrydate: yyyyymmdd, based on ISO 8061, which enables chronological ordering (see Annex A.3. MonthsCounter.cmd)
- Pagename: combination of codes (town, attraction, user, entry, ...) and/or words (nickname, pagetitle, ...), conforming a single name
- Ending: four-letters particular acronym only when the entry can be classified by type of attraction, activity or service

A batch programme to conduct the data arrangement of each website was created. In the software annex we have shown two examples: TravelBlog.org with webpage files stored in geographically arranged folders (see Annex A.3. TB03arrange.cmd), and TripAdvisor.com with webpage files in a unique directory (root) (see Annex A.3. TA03arrange.cmd).

2.2.5. Data cleaning

When dealing with online information, especially user-generated content, and we aim to perform content analyses with specialized programmes, cleaning the targeted HTML information becomes necessary for analysis. Schmidt (2001) asserts that data smoothing should be performed prior to any computer-assisted content analysis (in Stepchenkova, 2009). Indeed, there are several challenges and difficulties when studying travel blog content, and especially when extracting tourist image because of the subjective and generally unstructured nature of the information they convey.

Mainly, the following aspects of webpages were cleaned before the analysis of their content:

- Character encoding problems

Information containing non-English characters. The problem for the analysis lies in the fact that the characters not included between ASCII 32 and ASCII 127 (numbers, English alphabet and some signs or symbols) cause problems of interpretation because they are considered extended characters. The HTML pages are usually codified with UTF-8 (Unicode) or ISO-8859-1 (Latin 1) character sets. On the other hand, HTML entities are used to implement reserved characters or to express characters that cannot easily be entered with the keyboard (see an example in Table 2.4). The main task was to unify names using only English characters.

Table 2.4
Examples of Catalan proper names written in five ways

Correct word	Misspelling	UTF-8	HTML number	HTML name
Barça	Barca	BarÃ§a	Barça	Barça
Batló	Batlo	BatlÃ³	Batló	Batló
Gaudí	Gaudi	GaudÃ-	Gaudí	Gaudí
Gòtic	Gotic	GÃ²tic	Gòtic	Gòtic
Güell	Guell	GÃ¼ell	Güell	Güell
Montjuïc	Montjuic	MontjuÃ	Montjuïc	Montjuïc

Some HTML pages do not have the 'charset' argument in the meta content tag and, then, some of these characters cannot be correctly visualized through the explorer. Besides, the parser programme finds names which are the same written in different ways.

Thirdly, the semicolon of the HTML coding alters the files' structure which classifies the information, based on the CSV file format (Comma-Separated Values).

The solution adopted was to substitute all the codifications of the HTML pages with the corresponding Latin character. Finally, to assure the compatibility with all the programmes, we opted to include in the corresponding keyword group or category both the version of the names with accent, dieresis or cedilla marks and their equivalent without marks.

- Needless content

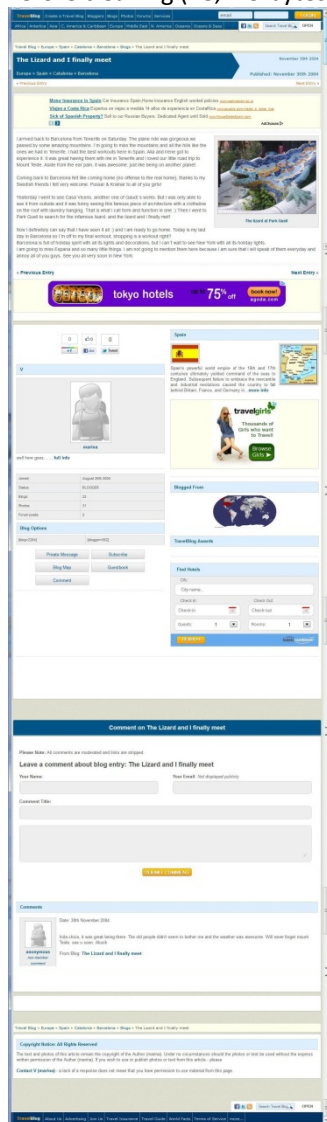
Carson (2008) points out that results coming from online sources are often full of ‘noise’ coming from commercial or news feeds on the websites (usually not travel-related). This author points out the necessity to reduce noise when locating blogs and to seek new strategies to analyse profiles of authors and content.

Web pages, when downloaded, contain a huge quantity of non-significant information which must be eliminated (such as menus, advertisements, etc.). This information is repetitive and is delimited by labels (HTML tags and scripts). If a navigation menu or commercial advertisement has to be eliminated, the process for doing so is by removing the initial tag, its content and the final tag. Thus, the rest of the code will continue to abide by HTML syntax (see an example in Figure 2.3).

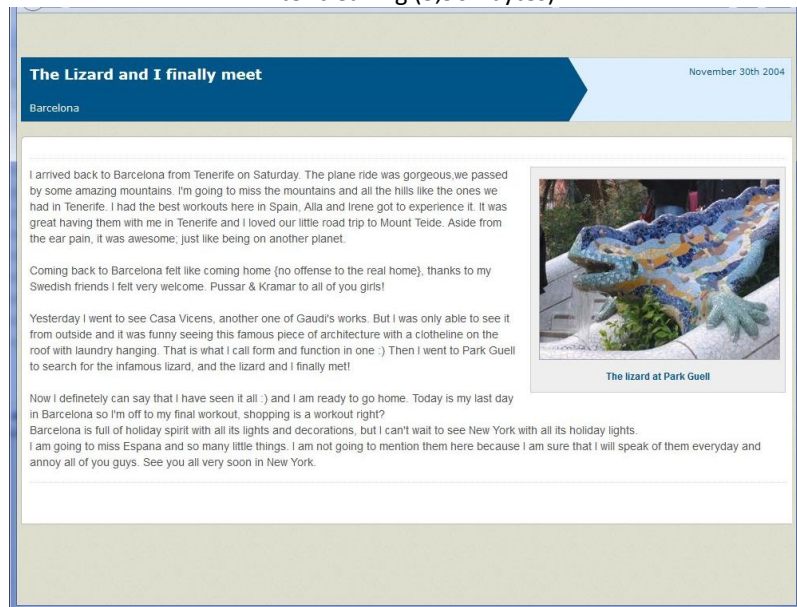
Figure 2.3

Sample of a travel blog entry before and after the process of cleaning

Before cleaning (28,279 bytes)



After cleaning (3,902 bytes)



Removed HTML directives

```
<div id="header"> ... </div>
<div class="breadcrumbs"> ... </div>
<div class="blog_breadcrumbs"> ... </div>
<span class="blog_date_published"> ... </span>
<div class="adsense_ ... </div>
<div class="blognav"> ... </div>
<div class="container blog_sidebar" id="blog_sidebar"> ... </div>
<div class="nav_wrapper ... </div>
<div class="left_fixed"> ... </div>
<div class="right_fluid"> ... </div>
<div class="container copyright"> ... </div>
<span id="cms_details"> ... </span>
<div id="footer"> ... </div>
```

Source: *TravelBlog.com* entry without photographs or people's real names

The main cleaning tasks we performed were to eliminate all superfluous information: menus, forms, advertisements, etc., leaving only the information created by users with the minimum HTML tags.

To implement these tasks, we need an application, with WYSIWYG interface (What You See Is What You Get HTML editor), that indicates which part of the HTML code corresponds to a specific area of the web page. We used the Microsoft Expression Web (MEW) application.

We also needed a search and mass removal utility able to eliminate this needless part of the code (for example, repetitive menus which appear on every web page) in all HTML files, wherever they exist, so as not to distort the text analysis. We used an *ad hoc* utility (Annex A.3. UtilsIO.java).

All in all, this cleaning up of data leaves only what bloggers have written visible, the HTML alt attribute and the caption of multimedia contents they have posted, as well as the data and place where the entry has been classified. All this without altering the HTML syntax.

- Non-significant words

Choi et al. (2007) point out the need to exclude certain grammatical and ‘stop words’ such as ‘is’, ‘a’, ‘the’, ‘I’ in computerized text analyses; as Doerfel and Barnett (1999) explain, stop words are prepositions, conjunctions, and transitive verbs that do not contribute to the meaning of the text. Other authors eliminating stop words, ambiguous words or words without significance (i.e. the, a, of, is, and, also, etc.) are Opoku (2006), Pan et al. (2007), Krizman and Belullo (2007), Koerte (2009). In results with word counts, Choi et al (2007) exclude words such as ‘year’, ‘room’, ‘hour’, ‘minute’ and similar terms that do not add significant meaning to information.

After the mentioned cleaning of the HTML pages, many words that are not interesting for the frequency analysis are still left, but which could be useful for qualitative content analyses. Therefore, the documents were not modified and before starting the quantitative content analysis, a blacklist of non-significant words was built up. This cleaning up of non-significant words was done using the SCA global black list combined with that of MaxQDA stop list (composed primarily of conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns and single letters) and this project’s local black list adding a forty very frequent words not significant for the project (alt, amb, back, bit, cat, day, del, dels, els, fax, find, first, found, going, got, info, just, last, les, long, look, lot, made, main, next, part, que, really, see, take, tel, think, time, took, two, una, very, view, visit, went).

2.2.6. Data debug

The textual content of websites, especially of travel blogs and reviews, is not ready for analysis and presents some difficulties related to the content itself that must be addressed.

Probably the worst problem with travel blog and review texts is **misspellings**. Misspellings are pointed out as a problem for purging by Stepchenkova et al. (2009) and Carson (2008) before analysis. Choi et al. (2007) also suggest making the spelling of the names of the

attraction sites consistent (Opoku, 2006; Choi et al., 2007). In this research, changes in word spelling concerned mainly keywords such as place names or tourist site names.

Once the data were clean and ordered, we implemented a preliminary frequency analysis and observed that many of the significant words were written incorrectly due to different reasons. The main task of data debugging was correcting misspellings. The solution consists of their substitution with their correct spelling using the Actual Search & Replace (ASR) utility (or a similar device) (see Annex A.1. Utilities; Actual Search & Replace). This process was performed mainly for travel blog and review entries because the content of official tourism websites was already well written.

Apart from misspellings themselves, on the one hand, there still existed some translations of Catalan names into Spanish. On the other, some compound Catalan nouns had common words translated into English or other languages. The appearance of different labels for the same destination is mentioned as a problem of analysis by Carson (2008). In the study of Stepchenkova and Morrisson (2006), since a great number of destination names was spelled differently in English and the autochthonous language (e.g., Saint-Petersburg and Sankt-Peterburg), they included a dictionary with the alternative spellings of all destinations from the master list. In our case, we included the place or sites names in their English version and in the autochthonous Catalan version.

We found misspellings, especially in phonograms, when there is no orthographic agreement between the Catalan phonemes and the English graphemes that represent them. There is also some voluntary incorrectness to give major emphasis to a word.

With regard to typing errors, in addition to the problems derived from the keyboard scan codes configuration as well as the absence of some special Catalan characters from many types of computer keyboards, there were the typical mistakes of lack and transposition of letters.

To see examples of this mixture of languages, misspellings and typing errors see Table 2.5.

Table 2.5
Examples of misspelled Catalan nouns

Correct noun	Misspellings
Barcelona	Bathelona, Barcellona, Barthelonaaaa, Bar-th-elona, Bar-tha-lona, Bar-the-lona ...
Casa Batlló	Batlo House; Casa Batillo, Batilló, Batlla, Batllao, Batllò, Bátillo, Batlo, Battllo, Battló ...
Antoni Gaudí	Antonio Gaudi; Gaudi, Gaüdi, Gaudie, Gaudii, Goudi, Goudí, Guadi, Gualdi, Gudi ...
Barri Gòtic	Barri Gotico; Bari Gotic; Ghotic Barrio, District, Quarter; Gotic area, neighborhood ...
Parc Güell	Parc Guël, Güel, Guéll, Guelle; Park Gueil, Guel, Güelle, Guelli; Parque Guelle, Güelle ...
Montjuïc	Monjuic, Montjeuic, Montjic, Montjouïc, Montjuïc, Montjuich, Montjuic, Montjuik ...

As a curiosity, we detected and corrected more than 100 different ways of writing incorrectly “Sagrada Família”.

2.2.7. Data language

Most studies dealing with text content analyses of travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites use information in English. As Dann and Liebman Parrinello (2009) explain,

tourism discourse, language and communication are heavily dominated by the English language. Today, this English centrality (especially in tourism studies) may be even greater with the Internet (Dann, 2011). This language is usually chosen by authors for analysis because of its dominance and abundance in the tourist online media and because most CATA software are prepared to deal with English text. This is the case of Hallett and Kaplan-Weigner (2010) who analyse official tourism websites in the English language to identify the language of tourism. Choi et al. (2007) and Krizman and Belullo (2007) analyse the image representations of a destination as expressed by the English-speaking travelling public in travel blogs, and other online sources in English, although expressing that Chinese blogs should also be studied to gain a major understanding. Koerte (2009) analysed the contents of official tourism websites and travel blogs of Tanzania in English. Pitt et al. (2007) excluded from their sample official tourism websites which were not in English. Pitt et al. (2008) analysed official websites in English.

Choi et al. (2007) point out the limitations of analyses only in English as other languages should be analysed to gain a major understanding of certain case studies. Hence, in this study, we first considered the analysis of websites in different languages, especially French. However, in our case no travel blog hosting websites in languages other than English fulfilled the criterion of having more than 100 entries about the case study.

Although all official tourism websites have an English version of their content, in the case of travel blogs and reviews websites, users are free to write a post in their language of preference. Therefore, although the majority of entries we studied were in English, we studied which other languages were present and in what proportion. Later on, for content analysis with keyword groups, only files and entries in English were retained.

All entries written in ISO 8859-15 Latin alphabet only permit the analysis of the frequencies of proper nouns. Languages other than English were removed from the sample to perform content analysis based on categories or groups of common nouns, because the great number of languages considerably increases the used keywords and irresolvable problems with homonyms arise. English was chosen as the language of analysis as it is the main language of all the travel blog and review hosting websites which fulfilled the selection criterion and all official tourism websites are translated into that language.

To detect the language of the different webpage files, we used a Language Detection programme (Annex A.3. *Ad hoc* programmes; LanguageDetect.java) based on the naive Bayes classifier. It is based on separating corpuses of text into 1, 2 or 3 letters and counting frequencies and weights of these groups of letters, and depending on their frequencies it is possible to say that a text is written in this or that language. It allows generating language profiles from Wikipedia abstract database files. In this case, all European languages have been used, including Catalan.

To check the Language, the HTML files are transformed into text files using the HTMLasText (HAT) utility (Annex A.1. Utilities; HTMLasText). HAT automatically removes all HTML tags and scripts from the document, and converts all HTML entities into the corresponding ASCII characters.

2.2.8. Data mining

First, the source code of the HTML pages was organized into directives, divisions, types, etc. For example, asking for the directive `<title>`, the ASR programme returns the title of all webpages and generates a report with the name, the path and other information about the file, as well as the line of the directive (`<title>title content</title>`). The same programme enables applying a batch process to replace, remove or insert text on the report by means of a TBL file. With a few “Regular expressions” within the TBL file you can obtain a CSV file. In this case we had three columns, with the header: “FileName;AbsolutePath;TitleContent”.

Some websites hosting travel blogs and reviews convey information about the bloggers in the same travel blog or review entry or in the corresponding traveller profile. For instance, an entry of TravelPod.com:

blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog-entries/username/entrycode/tpod.html has a link to blog.travelpod.com/members/username/default.html where there is the profile with the `<dt>Hometown</dt>` field that, in the majority of cases, contains the town and country of origin of the blogger. With the process explained here, we can obtain a CSV file with four columns (FileName;AbsolutePath;Town;Country). Other websites have similar fields such as `isFrom`, `livesIn`, `location`, or `citizenship`. In this case of TravelPod.com, we also have the field `<dt>Visitors</dt>`, which enables obtaining the number of all-time visitors to the site and of present monthly visitors.

2.2.9. Data dissemination

Before starting with the data analysis itself, studies dealing with online media should assess the capacity the information sources targeted have to disseminate the information they convey. Both travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites belong to the World Wide Web and thus must be understood and evaluated from an Internet-based point of view. Travel blog websites and official tourism websites give rise to a range of questions that should be addressed: When were they created? Does the geographical origin of the owners or administrators of the website influence the origin of users (bloggers or readers), or are regional borders diluted in this global network? How popular are they (ranking, indexed pages, backlinks,) and how much traffic do they receive? Who are the people related to them – administrators, bloggers and readers? Where do bloggers who travel to a specific country come from and how many are there? Who and how many people read these websites (audience) and where do they come from?

In the case of travel blogs, we found that throughout the literature dealing with travel blog hosting websites, such Internet-based aspects have to date been underresearched and objective processes to select t-blog websites are missing, although a few studies have made efforts in this respect. For example, Volo (2010a) analysed the key features for successful blog platforms. These features were divided into usability and sociability categories. Usability is related to the readers’ ability to search/browse by destination, the blog preview, the availability of information about the trip and its summary, the links to the most recent blogs, the table of contents and ease of use. Sociability is related to the rating, the bloggers’ smileys 😊, the guestbook, one-to-one communication, the profile and ease of connecting with family and friends.

Dippelreiter et al. (2008) evaluated eight tourism communities' sites with respect to Web 2.0 based on a catalogue of different criteria. These criteria included a technological classification, a sociability/usability classification (motivation, browsing methods, community features, personalization and security) and features such as members' profiles, friends' lists, search functionality, language, etc.

Although some relevant studies exist, objective and quantitative data on travel blog hosting websites as well as suitable methodological processes of analysis are still lacking in most cases. No comparative studies of travel blog websites on aspects such as traffic, audience and popularity of the sites have been found; neither have studies been found that compare these websites in relation to specific areas of study. The most important features of the travel blog websites from which specific case studies will be extracted must be determined prior to the analysis, as the subsequent results depend on these structural and diffusion features of the hosting websites. If travel blogs and reviews are to be explored in order to assess both researchers and agents on aspects such as tourism policies for specific destinations, how to choose the most relevant travel blog websites for the specific area of study must be carefully evaluated.

To measure such data dissemination, in this research data on visibility, usage and size of the websites under study were collected (see Table 2.6). These data were adapted to the nature and purpose of our study and are available to marketing and tourism researchers.

Table 2.6

Proposed webometrics

Visibility	. Indexed pages in search engines . Presence in social media . Link-based ranks
Usage	. Visitors, visits and average time on site . Geographical distribution of users . Visit-based ranks
Size	. Number of travel blog and review entries with content in the writing body . Number of media files in entries with expressive caption or HTML <i>alt</i> attribute

Source: Author

- Visibility

Visibility was measured through:

- Indexed pages: in our case, the number of indexed pages was obtained by entering the query site:domain in search engines such as Bing, Google, Yahoo and Yandex, for each travel blog- and review-hosting website and for each official tourism website.

- Presence in social media: to evaluate the presence of websites hosting travel blogs and reviews on other social networks, we obtained altmetric data from a sample of social media platforms: Delicious bookmarks (number of times the link has been saved), Google+ shares, Digg and Reddit submissions, Facebook and Twitter mentions, StumbleUpon likes, YouTube videos and Wikipedia external links, for each travel blog and review hosting website and for each official tourism website (see Table 2.7).

Table 2.7.

Obtaining altmetrics about an URL or domain (example: IgoUgo.com)

Type	Social media	Link
Bookmarking	Delicious	http://www.delicious.com/url/www.igougo.com
Social news	Digg	http://digg.com/search?q=site:www.igougo.com
Social news	Reddit	http://www.reddit.com/domain/igougo.com/
Networking	Facebook	(Google search) site:facebook.com inurl:posts "igougo.com"
Networking	Google+	https://plus.google.com/s/igougo.com/people
Networking	Twitter	http://topsy.com/s/igougo.com/tweet?window=a
Discover engine	StumbleUpon	https://www.stumbleupon.com/content/igougo.com
Video sharing	YouTube	http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query="igougo.com"
Free-content encyclopaedia	Wikipedia	http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:LinkSearch&limit=500&target=*.igougo.com

- Link-based ranks: in this study we used both link-based ranks, Google PageRank and Yandex Citation Index. To obtain the measures we visited <http://savedhistory.org/d/domain.com>

- Usage

- Popularity: in this study, we looked at two free access sources to obtain data about visitors: Google Trends for Websites and Google DoubleClick AdPlanner. The first provides a graph showing daily unique visitors which can be delimited by regions and specific time intervals, however, one drawback to this source is that websites with traffic volumes below the threshold set by the application do not appear. The second offers monthly estimated worldwide and regional traffic statistics and is broader and more complete. Therefore, in this case, only the Google DoubleClick AdPlanner was used. For USA traffic, free access data could also be found with regard to visits at Compete Site Analytics and Quantcast.

- Geographical distribution of users: we used two free access sources of information to find out where the users of the websites under study were from. First, Google Trends for Websites and Audience. Google Trends gives the proportion of users from the top ten regions of origin, but, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, low traffic sites are not considered. Second, Alexa Audience gives the percentage of visitors by country. To determine the origin of bloggers, they have to have an accessible profile with a residence field and only then is Alexa possible to determine countries of origin using data mining techniques. In some cases, data can be obtained from the blog or review page itself and in others the link to the user profile page has to be followed to obtain geographical information. In this step, a deeper analysis of the actual users writing the blog entries can be performed. Knowing where travel blog website members come from is very important for this research for several reasons: perceived images may vary according to the distance between the country of origin and the destination, they may also vary depending on cultural background and nationality. Moreover, it is important to know if the blogger's origins are similar to the tourist public coming to the destination.

- Visit-based ranks: we used the Alexa Traffic Rank which is the most popular website traffic measurement unit; a lower Alexa rank is a clear indication of the website's massive traffic (Thakur et al., 2011). Bosangit et al. (2009) used the Alexa ranking to identify the most visited travel blog websites from a list obtained with the Google search engine. For USA traffic, the Compete rank is based on how many unique visitors visited the site and the Quantcast rank is based directly on traffic volume.

- Size

One problem with travel blog analysis may be that entries might not be long enough or give rich information for analysis, Carson (2008) states that most entries in the travel blogs analysed were no longer than 200 words, with many consisting of only one or two words. In the present research, the travel blog entries without content were eliminated. Regarding blogs with very few words, this did not pose a problem to the present research since for quantitative analysis, even a few words in a blog entry may be significant.

We used two size webometric values, one measuring the number of entries with some textual content and the other measuring the number of media files which have some textual reference to identify them. Because most research focuses on a specific tourist destination, size in this case referred to the geographical subset under study, the contents to Catalonia.

2.3. Content analysis

This section first explains the selection of the analysis technique. Then, this technique (content analysis) is explained in its various aspects. Content analysis is defined, aspects such as the receptacle of content analysis (text in this case) are explained, the quantitative/qualitative approaches are compared and a mainly quantitative approach is adopted. After that, traditions within quantitative content analysis are explored. Then issues related to the way to analyse the object of study in relation to the sample, the interpretation and the unveiling of meaning are addressed. We also explain the categories used in the study, we explain the selection of the keyword groups or categories of study (geography, tourist attraction factors, negative/positive/opposite concepts and cultural identity) and give some considerations concerning them and concerning the key words within them. We also talk about the analysis units and the measuring system. Finally, we assess the tools to conduct the analysis; first, a revision of CATA software is undertaken, Site Content Analyzer (SCA) software is chosen for quantitative content analysis, and other auxiliary software used are explained.

2.3.1. Analysis technique selection

Banyai and Glover (2011) identify a research gap in that researchers are still trying to make out the 'what' and 'how' of analysing travel blogs; questions related to what research methods are appropriate and how travel blogs should be analysed are, and will be driven by, the researcher's goals and objectives. This research intends to contribute to clarifying these subjects and to adjusting the methodology to the specific needs of the study.

At first, an overview as to several techniques and methods which have been used by the different authors to analyse travel blogs and reviews or official tourism websites was performed. In general, the main techniques and methods researchers have used were gathered.

Dealing with travel blog or review content and/or official tourism website content:

- Content analysis: Pan et al. (2007), Carson (2008), Wenger (2008), Planas (2009), Bosangit and Mena (2009) with travel blogs. Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005), Opoku (2006), Pitt et al. (2007, 2008) with official tourism website representations content. Choi et al. (2007), Krizman and Belullo (2007), Chen et al. (2008), Koerte, (2009) with contents of travel blogs and official tourism websites. Specifically, “quantitative content analysis to extract common themes related to destination image, tourists, assessment of the destination and actual tourist behaviour” (Bosangit & Mena, 2009) was used by Carson (2008), Kurashima et al. (2005, 2006), Mena and Bosangit (2007), Pan et al. (2007), Pühringer and Taylor (2008), Wenger (2008). Specific techniques within content analysis: Chen et al. (2008) and Choi et al. (2007) conducted a content analysis both from quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Other techniques within content analysis used were word frequency/word counts/text mining (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Pan et al., 2007; Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Choi et al. 2007; Koerte, 2009), correspondence analysis (Opoku, 2006; Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Pitt et al., 2007), semantic network analysis (Pan et al., 2007; Doerfel & Barnett, 1999); Aaker’s brand personality dimensions (Pitt et al., 2007, 2008; Opoku, 2006); expert judgment (Choi et al., 2007).
- Discourse analysis: this method was used by Jones and Anlony (2008), Karlsson (2006) on travel blogs and Huertas et al. (2010) and Hallett and Kaplan-Weigner (2010) (the latter with critical discourse analysis, mediated discourse analysis and multi-modal discourse analysis as well as social constructionism) on official tourism websites.
- Narrative analysis: Bosangit et al., (2009), Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2008).
- Methods related to language or structure: morphological analysis and extraction of association rules (Kurashima et al., 2005).

Other aspects of travel blogs were studied through:

- Computational based methods such as computing mutual awareness, ranking-based clustering method and performance metrics (Lin et al., 2006).
- Methods within the consumer behaviour field such as the analysis of blogs with the AIDA model (Lin & Huang, 2006).
- Quantitative methods such as the stance-shift analysis to compare bloggers’ evaluations of tourism products (Crofts et al., 2009)
- Qualitative methods such as netnography (Volo, 2009a) tackling aspects such as usability and sociability.

Other aspects of official tourism websites studied were:

- Usability and interactivity (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2011)
- Use of two-group randomized experimental design: Lepp et al. (2010) used this technique to assess the influence of being exposed to the official tourism website of the country on tourist image change.
- Analysis of success factors through meta-analysis: Park and Gretzel (2007).

The paper of Banyai and Glover (2011) focuses on the different methods used to analyse travel blogs. The authors observed that the two most popular research methods used to analyse the content of online diaries are content analysis and narrative analysis. According to the authors, content analysis is used when researchers aim to study the tourists' activities at the destination and their main perceptions and impressions of the destination. Otherwise, narrative analysis is the driving force when researchers are looking to bring to life the chronological story of tourists' experiences at the destination, along with the identities created and the meanings assigned to tourism experience. However, the authors point out some alternative methods for blog content analysis such as digital ethnography, and tecnobiography.

In relation to official tourism websites, most of the techniques used with travel blogs and reviews could also be applied.

Once an overview was made, the different cases were evaluated more deeply and some of the techniques were discarded in relation to the study objectives. The method used for our study had to suit the focus of the analysis which is to see: what is said and explained, in terms of tourist image and identity elements about Catalonia and its destinations, within travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites.

Discourse Analysis is "a qualitative type of analysis which relates to the scrutiny of language, semiotics (latent meaning in text) and conventions found in narrative and genre" (Hesmondhalgh, 2006). The term 'discourse' may be either seen as "related to social action and interaction which focuses on language as it is used" or as "a social construction of reality". Here, discourse may suggest what is actually "'knowable, say-able and doable' within a particular historical context" (Hesmondhalgh, 2006). Discourse analysis was used by Jones and Alony (2008) and Karlsson (2006) to analyse travel blogs. Discourse analysis "engages in characteristics of manifest language and word use, description of topics in media texts, through consistency and connection of words to theme analysis of content and the establishment of central terms" (Neuendorf, 2002). Some authors such as Banyai and Glover (2011) classify this technique as being one of the content analysis variants. This technique was discarded for the present study as it is a qualitative technique focusing on the analysis of language use and meaning underlying text and not on its actual manifest content or the identity elements which characterize the destination. Although discourse analysis also classifies information into topics, its main objective is to extract a discourse structure from text, which goes beyond the boundaries of same text.

Narrative analysis is a qualitative research method which focuses on "the ubiquitous ways in which people make and use stories to interpret the world" (Hunt, Romero & Good, 2006). "Because of the qualitative nature and manual process of analysis, narrative analysis can result in high costs" and "may not offer time-efficient results or data that can be generalized to a greater population"(Banyai & Glover, 2011). This technique was used by Bosangit et al. (2009) and Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2008).

Narrative analysis studies blogs as narrative objects, focusing on context, structure and meaning but not on the image and identity elements they convey, not on the meaning of the content itself. For instance, the narrative structure of the blogs about Pennsylvania in the

study of Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2008), included “characterization, temporal dimension, relational organization, and space categorization” and the analysis involved “deconstructing the stories into episodes and quotations, coding these quotations and episodes, and interpreting the relationships between codes” (Banyai & Glover, 2011). Moreover, the focus of this technique seems to be the analysis of the actor (in this case the writer of the text) and not its content. As explained by Neuendorf (2002), in narrative analysis the analyst is interested not in the text *per se* but in characters as carriers of the story. This technique “offers researchers and destination marketers insight into how tourists create meanings and identities based on their travel experiences” (Banyai & Glover, 2011). Along with other approaches such as rhetorical analysis, the emphasis is not so much “on what the message says as on how the message is presented” (Neuendorf 2002). The study of Bosangit et al. (2009) analysed blogs to see how tourists “construct order and make meaning from their experiences”. “The researchers used Mishler’s (1995) framework based on the interactional and institutional contexts in which stories are created, recounted, and consumed to analyse the social aspect of the narrative” (Banyai & Glover, 2011). We discarded this for our research as it does not serve the purpose of this research, which is to acknowledge what travel blog and review texts are actually saying. Besides, this technique is not useful to analyse large quantities of data.

Morphological analysis used by Kurashima et al. (2005) is an interesting approach which extracts transaction sets from the articles. “The surrounding text of a location name is first extracted from the blog content. The extracted text is divided into sentences and then into morphemes. This process is language dependent. Then the sentences are converted into a *transaction*”. This method is very interesting for finding morphological relations among words and for finding relationships between words within the same sentence. It is also valuable for finding relations of words with special and temporal locations and intentionality. However, it was rejected for the present study analysis as it does not fit with the aim of this study. Morphological analysis is based in linguistics and therefore the analysis could vary from language to language, or even from register to register. Our aim in this study is to look for relations between concepts or themes and to see how these concepts are associated to certain locations; our aim is not to spot linguistic relationships between morphemes or language particles, nor to study the linguistic structures surrounding locations, although these may convey information about the mentioned themes.

Netnography used by Broillet and Dubosson (2008), which studies what the community of bloggers says pre- and after-sales service, was also rejected for the present study as it is a method mainly applied to evaluative texts on specific products and services, with marketing purposes. A netnographical approach does not focus on what is said about the image of a destination (Catalonia) but on how products and services are evaluated. Similarly, approaches closer to Internet marketing on tourism and product evaluation which focus on blogs as marketing tools, such as Lin and Huang (2006), were discarded as they do not give an answer to our methodological focus.

The **ASEB** (Activities, Setting, Experiences and Benefits) framework was used by Bosangit and Mena (2009) to extract motivations, meanings and behaviours of tourists detected perceived strengths and weaknesses of first time visits of Filipino Americans to the Philippines. This method has the characteristic that “it lies on tourists’ evaluation of their trip in their own

words” (Bosangit and Mena, 2009). However, this content analysis method is mainly behaviour-oriented and eminently evaluative. In this research our main goal is not to analyse the tourists’ evaluations of tourism products or experiences, nor to identify their customer behaviour but to build an overall manifest image of the destination in terms of image elements and cultural identity elements, which goes further than product evaluations.

After considering the different methods, and responding to the purpose of giving a broader and more complete analysis of the image of a particular destination within travel blogs and reviews and OTWs, **content analysis** was found to be the most suitable technique and the one most researchers have used when analysing blogs. Content analysis is a broad method, highly recognized and used which suits the aim of this study very well; as Huertas et al. (2010) explain, “content analysis is a particularly useful research tool as it is ideally suited to quantify and classify the content of tourism messages”. It presents several advantages for the analysis of travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites: with content analysis, researchers can gain access to every aspect of a visitor’s trip and every phase of the tourist experience cycle (Pan et al., 2007). “It can be applied to examine most piece of writing or occurrence of recorded communication” and is used in a large number of fields (Opoku, 2006). Moreover, it is very suitable to compare different images and assess image congruency among different sources; as Banyai and Glover (2011) contend, it can be utilized to discover gaps in tourism promotion and it is a time- and cost-saving option and is of unobtrusive nature as it does not have any effect on the subject studied. It is the best method to identify what is said about a specific destination in terms of tourist image and identity elements, as it focuses on the content of communicative elements itself, on what is mentioned, and not on structure or linguistic elements, for example.

Indeed, González’s (2010) report, which analysed the presence of Catalonia and its brands in Web 2.0 environments, determined that it is convenient to make future studies on travel forums and travel blogs applying methods of content analysis which enable analysing in detail the themes, quantity and quality of the online conversations. Furthermore, this report points out the necessity to evaluate whether destinations are valued in a positive or negative way.

The selected technique is explained and developed in its various aspects in the following chapters.

2.3.2. Definition, aspects and elements

Content analysis is a consolidated methodology in the field of social sciences for the analysis of communicative products. This methodology “has been developing since the early 1920s in several fields, including tourism, although maybe in a lesser degree” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

Some authors give general definitions of this technique: it is a “nonobtrusive” technique (Stepchenkova et al., 2009) which “aims at describing, with optimum objectivity, precision, and generality, what is said on a given subject in a given place at a given time” (Lasswell, Lerner & Pool, 1952). Piñuel (2002) defines content analysis and its elements very accurately: “We usually call *content analysis* to the different interpretative procedures of communicative products (messages, texts or speech) which come from singular

communication processes previously registered, and that, based on measuring techniques, sometimes quantitative (statistics based on unit counting), sometimes qualitative (logics based in the category combination), have as an objective to elaborate and process relevant data concerning the very same conditions in which these texts were produced, or the conditions allowing their posterior use". According to Gao, (1996) cited in Stemler (2001), content analysis enables researchers to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion. "What makes the technique particularly rich and meaningful is its reliance on coding and categorizing of the data" (Stemler, 2001).

Some definitions of content analysis concern only textual analyses because when analysis of content first began to be used, it was mainly devised for written text analysis and examination (Piñuel, 2002; Neuendorf, 2002) and still today textual information is the major corpus of analysis studied through this technique. In this respect, Stemler (2001) reading through fundamental works on content analysis (Berelson, 1952; Gao, 1996; Krippendorff, 1980; and Weber, 1990), defines it as "a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding". Similarly, Opoku (2006) defines it as "a method of gathering and analyzing a text or content of a piece of writing into various groups or categories depending on selected criteria and by systematically identifying specified characteristics or patterns within the text or content in order to predict and make valid inferences from the data". Although these definitions only apply to text, Stemler's (2001) acknowledges other works studying other objects such as student drawings or videotapes. Indeed, today, the technique is used to analyse various visual objects. In fact, any object or element containing information or some kind of meaning can be studied through it, as long as the data are durable in nature (Stemler, 2001).

As Piñuel (2002) ascertains, "its own denomination as analysis of "content", leads us to suppose that "content" is enclosed, ranged –and even sometimes hidden- in a certain "receptacle" (a physic document, the registered text, etc.) and that by analysing inside this "receptacle", its content can be unveiled (its meaning or its sense), so that a new "interpretation" which takes into account the analysed data, enables to make a diagnostic; that is to say, a new knowledge (gnoscere "know") through its intellectual penetration (dia, in Greek is a prefix which means "through" in the sense of "traversing"). "Bardin indicates content analysis becomes a challenge of des-occultation or re-velation of the *expression*, where above all the aim is to explore the hidden, the latent, the not apparent, the potential, the inedited (or not said) of every message" (as cited in Piñuel, 2002). This content may take the form of words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated (Neuman, 2003).

Tourism is an ideal field in which to use the analysis of content technique because it works with induced meanings, symbolism, imaginary, persuasion, notions of authenticity, hidden messages, etc. Many different types of tourism communication products (photographs, informational texts, websites, souvenirs, etc.) exist and seemingly, through the analysis of content, researchers manage quite successfully to understand the meaning they convey, their background, and this leads them to useful results.

Content analysis is understood through two aspects: "framework" and "logic" (Krippendorff, 1980). We understand that content analysis needs a framework or object of study and also

logic procedures of information processing and analysis. The framework could be the different texts of analysis about a destination and the logic all the different processes and decisions concerning the selection of the framework and study sample, the methods of processing the information and of measuring its validity and reliability, which will be explained later.

Research into the literature reveals the following as purposes of content analysis. According to Berelson (1952), the five main purposes of content analysis are:

- To describe substance characteristics of message content,
- To describe form characteristics of message content,
- To make inferences to producers of content,
- To make inferences to audiences of content, and
- To predict the effects of content on audiences.

In this case, corresponding to the purpose of the study, the main aim of content analysis was to describe the substance characteristics of message content and to make inferences to producers of content.

2.3.3. The receptacle of content analysis

As drawn from the several definitions, different objects, receptacles and aspects can be studied with the analysis of content method. Thus, the receptacle of content or the support through which image is transmitted must be chosen in the first place.

Before seeing specifically which receptacle other authors addressing travel blogs have studied, we undertook a general literature review of the objects (offline) studied within the tourism field that could give us insights into *what* information receptacles have been studied and *how*, in relation with tourist image studies. The most popular objects or items analysed by tourism researchers, most of them based upon content analysis, have been: photographs (Albers & James 1983, 1988; Markwell, 1997; Jenkins, 2003), tourist brochures (Cohen, 1995; Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Molina & Esteban, 2006; Caton & Almeida, 2008; Cannon 2008), postcards (Albers & James, 1983, Hughes, 1992), souvenirs (Palou, 2005; Mariné-Roig, 2011b), films (Mercille, 2005), travelogues (Dann, 1996), guidebooks (Cannon 2008; Galí & Donaire, 2005; Mariné-Roig, 2011a; Mariné-Roig & Anton, 2011), television (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998), festivals (Jeong & Almeida, 2004), travel blogs and reviews (Pan et al., 2007; Carson, 2008; Wenger, 2008; Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Planas, 2009), official tourism websites (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Opoku, 2006; Pitt et al., 2007, 2008), various online media (Choi et al., 2007; Krizman & Belullo, 2007; and Chen et al., 2008; Koerte, 2009), among others.

The above-mentioned objects were content analysed to study tourist images, both in offline and online contexts, among other subjects. However, this content analysis to unveil tourist image was not done directly on the object in most cases but was studied through some specific information containers or receptacles along the years. These supports may be the same for different objects of study and may also be similar to the same in online and offline contexts. Among these containers of information, we observed that both visual and textual information (within brochures, guidebooks, websites, etc.) was content analysed with satisfactory results to study tourist image. The offline content analysis studies to unveil

tourist image embody the ground on which online image studies (applying content analysis or not) are based.

Tourist image may be contained in and studied through visual images or photographs, audiovisual material (videos, films, TV, speeches), written text, audio material (interviews, radio, etc.), objects such as souvenirs, etc. Some of these image containers may be objects of study in themselves (for example, a photograph is an image in itself, as well as souvenirs which are images in themselves) or instead, the containers may be located in wider objects of study (for example a website may contain audiovisual material, photographs, text, etc.). In addition to that, one same container of information can be located within different objects of study: for example pictures or photographs, may be found in guidebooks, brochures, websites, postcards, etc.

Due to the multiple dimensions of destination image (Gallarza et al., 2002) and the greater complexity that the Internet has brought to tourism marketing, there is a need to examine both textual and visual information provided to understand the complete structure of destination image formation in the online market space (Choi et al., 2007). Indeed, reading through multiple examples of tourist image studies, the containers that have been most widely studied to date are photographs and text (given that audiovisuals and multimedia information are more complicated to study and their emergence is more recent). For example, regarding audiovisuals, Kim and Richardson (2003) state that “motion pictures are an important element of popular culture. They impact on many people in a short period and few would deny that movie-going is a major leisure activity throughout the world”.

Stepchenkova et al. (2009) draw from multiple works (Neuendorf, 2002; Rainer & Hall 2003; Romano et al. 2003; Wickham Woods 2005) that “over the past two decades, content-analysis research has remarkably benefited from the exponentially increasing volume of electronic data, including articles in general media databases, communications in virtual communities, and textual and pictorial materials from Web sites”. Choi et al. (2007) claim that with the increasingly rich and readily available text on the web, content analysis of tourism image formation is gaining in popularity.

Today, text in media messages, interview transcripts, discussion boards in virtual communities, and travel diaries are analysed through content analysis (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). Travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites are objects many authors approach with content analyses. Travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites contain different receptacles of information; they have the particularity of gathering both visual information (especially photographs) and large corpuses of textual information that is more or less descriptive of a certain destination, among other multimedia information. Concerning the authors who opt to analyse the content of blogs (and not, for instance, their external links), we observed that the main receptacles of analysis are firstly text and then photographs. The same happens with the content analyses of official tourism websites.

Planas (2009) opted for the analysis of only photographic content within travel blogs: this author describes quantitatively the appearances of certain themes within pictures of Girona, which were classified into categories. Content analysis for photographic studies (offline) in tourism has notably been employed by authors such as Jenkins (2003).

Some authors, such as Choi et al. (2007) and Krizman and Belullo (2007), analyse both textual-narrative and visual contents of online media: Choi et al. (2007) first identify the most frequently used words or phrases and word associations describing their case study destination on travel-related websites and compare them across the different online information sources. Second, they compare visual information on the destination on different websites and examine the effectiveness of visual images. Third, they examine how different sub-categories of websites project the images of the destination and provide marketing implications if there are disparities in image representation. A combination of methods and receptacles seems to be the best way of approaching tourism image according to Choi et al. (2007). Krizman and Belullo (2007) analyse Narrative information (text) and Visual information (photographs), and for both receptacles similar categories are created to classify content.

Among researchers studying travel blogs and official tourism websites, the text that blogs contain seems to be the most analysed source of information, or receptacle. It seems the general rule of content analysis in social sciences also applies to tourism studies: it is used “to analyze various forms of communications, [but] above all, those that utilize textual data” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). Authors analysing mainly textual information are: Kurashima et al., (2005), Opoku (2006), Pan et al. (2007), Waldhör (2007), Pitt et al. (2007, 2008), Carson (2008), Wenger (2008), Chen et al. (2008), Bosangit and Mena (2009), Bosangit et al. (2009), Koerte (2009). These authors perform either quantitative or qualitative content analyses on corpuses of text found in travel blogs and reviews or OTWs, some of them to study tourist image.

In this research, **text** will be analysed as it is considered the major and richest source of explicit information written by the tourists themselves. “By far, the largest body of data on the planet is text. Unlike numerical or categorical scales, text allows people to express themselves in any way they wish” (CATPAC website). In this respect, our research is centred on manifest and not latent content (see Neuendorf, 2002), that is to say, content that is physically there, that is explicit and not deduced from other variables. Text provides subjective information which is explicit and written by the bloggers and therefore the influence of the researcher’s interpretation is far less important than with the interpretation of photographs. Moreover, regarding photographs, there are concerns about the degree to which photographs reflect the fullness of tourists’ experiences and whether the meaning the tourists give to photographs is the same as the researchers’ (Caton & Almeida, 2008). The information of textual corpuses is usually richer and clearer. To overcome these problems, future research could focus on text just below the pictures (the captions). By analysing pictures through their captions, the influence of the researcher’s interpretation disappears as it is the author-blogger who interprets what appears in the picture.

Although it could seem that pictures themselves would be better to analyse tourist image, textual corpuses have proven highly effective in studying tourist image. O’Leary and Deegan (2005) (as cited in Krizman and Belullo, 2007) argued that content analysis of written information, such as guidebooks and travel brochures, could provide a great amount of information about the images projected by a tourism destination. This can be proved by the examples of studies mentioned above analysing tourist image within blogs through text

analysis. Another example (offline) is the study of Galí and Donaire (2005) who analysed the texts and the visual materialization of guidebooks to study tourist image. Similarly, Mariné-Roig (2011a) and Mariné-Roig and Anton (2011) analysed the tourist destination image, identity and evolution of a coastal destination through the analysis of text within tourism guidebooks.

Moreover, today new technologies have greatly facilitated the gathering and analysis of textual data, which has not happened in the same way with pictures as they always need more human-supervised treatment and interpretation. Today, “immense volumes of easily accessible textual material, speed and simplicity of the data-collection process, lack of complications associated with human subjects, and advances in development of various computer programs to support textual data analysis are factors that stimulate the use of content-analysis research in social sciences (Macnamara 2003; Miles and Weitzman 1994; Romano et al. 2003)” (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). The facility of text treatment through specialized software is another important reason to choose text as the receptacle of analysis of tourist image.

Hence, the content analysis techniques and processes described in the following chapters were applied to text analytics.

2.3.4. Quantitative vs. qualitative approach

The quantitative (scientific or etic) vs. the qualitative (art or etic) methodological debate has been ongoing in social science areas such as tourism, marketing and anthropology (Walle, 1997). Content analysis can be conducted from two different approaches: qualitative and/or quantitative. The section below addresses the issue of what type of content analysis (qualitative/quantitative) is more suitable for the present research.

According to Insch and Moore (1997) (in Stepchenkova et al., 2009), content analysis is capable of capturing a richer sense of concepts within the data due to its qualitative basis and, at the same time, can be subjected to quantitative data analysis techniques. The qualitative approach to content analysis refers to “nonstatistical and exploratory methods, which involve inductive reasoning (Berg 1995)” (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). The quantitative one refers “to methods that are capable of providing statistical inferences from text populations” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

A central idea of **quantitative** content analysis is that “many words of text can be classified into much fewer content categories” (Weber, 1990). Berelson (1952) summarized content analysis as a “research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. Albers and James (1983) explained from a quantitative approach that content analysis is a method “concerned primarily with appearances - their distribution, frequency, clustering, and corresponding conditions”. For these authors it provides a way to contrast and compare large data sets.

The quantitative methodology of extracting content categories from the text, counting their occurrences in the sampled text blocks, and analysing associations between categories using the frequency matrix was developed by the mid-20th century; this type of analysis is also

called contingency analysis (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). Some authors when defining content analysis only consider this type of quantitative approach: Neuendorf (2002) defines it as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” and claims that what we call content analysis can only be a systematic and quantitative technique. For the author, “content analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity, intersubjectivity, *a priori* design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented” (Neuendorf, 2002). Others consider that content analysis is usually associated to quantitative methods (Banyai & Glover, 2011)

The quantitative approach for content analysis of text has been criticized by several authors, especially in the sense that when transforming language texts into quantitative data, richness of meaning and contextual information is lost, and nuances of language are not spotted. George, 1959, criticizes that that, for example, figures of speech, humor or irony are lost (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). Furthermore, as Crotts et al. (2009) note from the work of Wilson et al. (2005) “data are rich in sentiments that require unique skills in subjectivity analysis to be recognized and interpreted”.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argue that reducing large volumes of text to quantitative data “does not provide a complete picture of meaning and contextual codes, since texts may contain many other forms of emphasis besides sheer repetition” (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). For Newbold, Boyd-Barrett, and Van Den Bulck (2002) “it would be too simplistic to base decisions in this regard on mere figures obtained from a statistical content analysis” (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). For Stepchenkova et al. (2009) the main problems of the quantitative paradigm are “the decontextualization of the textual material and selection of the outsider variables for analysis of social phenomena”. Quantitative, especially computerized content analysis, is criticized by Banyai and Glover (2011). Banyai and Glover (2011) reiterate the words of Hookway, (2008) for whom computerized content analysis “often times results in losing the blogs’ reflection of “real life,” of “what happens in reality”. “The extraction of words from phrases, even phrases from paragraphs, might result in meaning loss in that words and phrases could be taken out of context and misinterpreted” (Banyai & Glover, 2011).

Concerning the **qualitative approach**, Stepchenkova et al. (2009) argue that “qualitative epistemologies share the view that “reality” is a social and cultural creation, which can only be interpreted, approximated but not fully apprehended”. However, qualitative approaches to content analysis have also been criticized. The main criticisms of qualitative approaches are that they include approaches such as rhetorical, narrative, semiotic, and discourse analyses to textual data that cannot easily be summarized (Stepchenkova et al., 2009); this approach is intensive and highly time-consuming because of the need for interpersonal relations and because it relies too heavily on the researcher reading through the data and on his/her interpretation and hence, usually samples of data are small and results often too subjective (Stepchenkova et al. 2009; Opoku, 2006); some see this approach as unscientific or little reliable. For Opoku (2006), qualitative content analysis is difficult and may be impossible to perform with scientific reliability. Quantitative content analysis can conform to the scientific method and produce reliable findings; but on the other hand, qualitative

analysis of texts is necessary to help understand their deeper meanings and likely interpretations by audiences (Opoku). For Duriau and Reger (2004), although quantitative analysis might not unveil latent content, human coders are not very reliable either, and they argue that in some cases, latent content is not so important after all for the question under study.

Moreover, in qualitative content analyses, the way of writing and the register language of the text itself can be problematic. Crofts et al. (2009) explain that Mishne (2006) points out that blogs are written in an “unreserved manner containing frequent use of informal language or jargon” which becomes problematic for computerized analysis of text. Similarly Pühringer and Taylor (2008) point out that content of travel blogs is highly variable, and content language and cultural nuances can be a drawback to effectively interpret meanings, for the author this ‘noise’ around T-blog content can be reduced through the application of technology-based applications for summarizing, contextualizing and reporting on the content of selected T-blog sites.

Evaluating both quantitative and qualitative paradigms of approach to content analysis, we decided that a quantitative approach would be the most suitable. However, for the specific issue of cultural identity, apart from quantitative analyses, a more qualitative approach was necessary to obtain results and interpret them. As the purpose of this research is to have a general overview of the projected and perceived images that is as broad as possible, large quantities of data will be analysed, and summing up results seems inevitable and reading all blogs too time consuming. In this respect, quantitative methods were found to be more effective and clearer. “Despite its limitations, quantitative content analysis has long been employed in social studies due to its clear methodological reasoning based on the assumption that the most frequent theme in the text is the most important, as well as to the ability to incorporate such scientific methods” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). These methods include “a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing” (Neuendorf, 2002). Quantitative content analysis techniques enable the researcher to deal with great quantities of information and are mainly based on classification of information content into thematic categories. It is a suitable method to spot the themes within text, how they relate to each other and to specific locations, in accordance with our research goals. Moreover, this method enables the combination of several techniques such as in Pan et al. (2007), who simultaneously used content analysis by means of word counts and categorization, and then from this data they perform semantic network analysis (a specific technique within content analysis).

We argue that by using quantitative methods we avoid overrelying on the researcher’s interpretation because, as Pühringer and Taylor (2008) also suggest, language content and cultural nuances can obscure meaning and effective interpretation. For this research the use of jargon, cultural nuances, informal language, are not a problem as any significant words, even if informal, could be analysed and incorporated to the corresponding keywords group or category.

Despite using a quantitative approach, we fully agree with the statement by Stepchenkova et al. (2009) regarding qualitative approaches: ““reality” is a social and cultural creation, which can only be interpreted, approximated but not fully apprehended”. As Choi et al.

(2007) explain, content analysis is exploratory in nature and [always] relies on subjective judgments to some extent. Our purpose is not to apprehend reality completely as details will escape, nor to give an “objective” analysis of tourist image, but to give an approximate, useful, view of reality, which ought to be complemented with other techniques to achieve a more complete view of reality. Indeed, as Neuendorf (2002) asserts for quantitative content analyses, “we do not ask “is it true”, but rather, “do we agree it is true?””. The important thing is intersubjectivity, that we socially agree about a subject not that this is “true” or “false”. According to Neuendorf’s perspective, this intersubjectivity represents the closest you can get to objectivity in social matters.

In this research we do not claim that decisions must be made only based on quantitative content analysis but we think that this study helps to advance in this respect, and it provides a suitable way of dealing with large amounts of data that are not being currently used for decision-making, available online, and of extracting their meaning. In fact, for one specific issue (cultural identity), a more qualitative approach was necessary to obtain results.

Indeed, as Walle (1997) explains, social researchers are increasingly seeing the advantages of combining elements of both types of approaches to achieve better results and a broader comprehension of the tourist phenomenon. For example, Choi et al. (2007), Chen et al. (2008), and Huertas and Fernández-Cavia (2009) use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. “There are tendencies nowadays to see both content analysis traditions as complementary methods in a continuum of techniques to look for meaning and impact of texts” (Stepchenkova et al. 2009). Krippendorff, argues that both analyses are complementary and attached: “quantitative/qualitative distinction is a mistaken dichotomy between the two kinds of justifications of content analysis designs: the explicitness and objectivity of scientific data processing on the one side and the appropriateness of the procedures used relative to a chosen context the other” (2003). Banyai and Glover (2011) suggest that research on blogs must evolve to incorporate a variety of research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, to harness the full potential travel blogs can offer. In this sense, although this research paradigm is mostly quantitative, we also embrace qualitative aspects of analysis, especially when dealing with cultural identity issues on a smaller scale.

2.3.5. How to content analyse the object of study in relation to the sample

Content analyses are performed with different study samples. These samples of the object of study can be approached in different ways depending on the quantitative/qualitative approach of the research and the study objectives.

According to the shape or design of the very same object of analysis, Piñuel (2002) exposes different ways to analyse the content of the object. The author distinguishes horizontal, vertical, transversal and longitudinal analyses:

Horizontal analyses are used with an extensive documental corpus and usually quantitative analyses are made on them. Then the vertical or intensive analyses are used with reduced corpuses of analysis and are keener than qualitative analyses.

Transversal analysis consists of selecting samples of textual corpuses differing, say, in the position about a certain subject and forming independent groups with them that are

analysed in the same historical context. This type of analysis could be used to see, for example, if bloggers from different blogging communities (websites) differ in perceptions or not.

Finally, longitudinal analysis consists of analysing textual corpora at different moments of their path; that is to say in different periods of time. The present research does not take a temporal perspective on blogs, nonetheless this is a very interesting issue to analyse in future studies.

Usually, travel blogs are analysed in vertically by selecting small corpora of analysis, as explained in section 2.2.2, but some authors such as Koerte (2009) make temporal analyses, analysing the same categories along the years.

In the present case, a horizontal type of analysis was employed as the study sample is formed by large quantities of text and the approach to its analysis is mainly quantitative.

2.3.6. Interpretation

As explained by Stepchenkova et al. (2009), Roberts (2000) studied the role of interpretation in quantitative content-analysis methodologies. The author classified interpretation issues into two dimensions:

- 1st dimension, **structural**, “distinguishes among the ways of obtaining a numerical data matrix of themes or categories frequencies from the text” (Stepchenkova et al, 2009). “Along the structural dimension of Roberts’s taxonomy, there are thematic, semantic, and network text analyses. The thematic approach is rooted in contingency analysis and involves counting themes (categories or key words) belonging to a certain theoretical construct within text blocks. In the semantic text analysis, textual data are separated into specified semantic units—for example, subject-action-object triplets—and every unit is associated with a certain numerical sequence (Franzosi 1997)”. “In the network analysis, text is presented as a network of interrelated themes, and theme linkages are measured by specially generated variables (Salisbury 2001)” (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). “A quantitative content analysis always produces a two-dimensional data matrix suitable for further statistical analysis” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009)

In the present case of study, a thematic approach was mainly performed. In the present research we are interested to see which themes are mentioned in travel blogs and reviews and OTWs, and to classify information into thematic categories. A common way to use blogs is to analyse their content on a certain topic and then the various themes on that topic are explored (Jones & Alony, 2008). The content of official tourism website documents has also been analysed through topic analysis. This type of approach was adopted for all themes. Semantic text analysis was also used in certain aspects of the cultural identity to be able to deepen into the analysis and to extract useful and usable information.

- 2nd dimension, **interpretational**, “reflects the perspective from which results are interpreted” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). The interpretational dimension of Roberts’s (2000) taxonomy differentiates between the two types of text interpretation: Representational, “when a researcher understands texts representationally, they are used to identify their

sources' intended meanings", and Instrumental, "when a researcher understands texts instrumentally, they are interpreted in terms of the researcher's theory" (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

In the present research, as we are aware of the limitations of quantitative analysis, since further cultural studies of bloggers and contact with them would be necessary in order to better understand their meanings, we do not intend to give full representational results but instrumental ones, by building a theory suitable for the purpose of the analysis. In this case the theoretical perspective would be related to the tourist-image construct. A more representational perspective was adopted for the case of cultural identity image analysis, where the meanings that some identity elements had for bloggers were gathered and studied (see 2.4.2.4).

As explained by Stepchenkova et al., (2009), "Roberts (2000) concluded that in many instances, text analysis involves both representational and instrumental perspectives since the researcher can interpret instrumentally the thematic categories that were obtained representationally from the text".

2.3.7. Meaning unveiling

Finding some kind of significance, rule or meaning is fundamental for content analysis. How to find such meanings, or how to build meanings out of data, can be more or less subjective, more or less daring and more or less specific.

Piñuel (2002) explains that content analysis can be **exploratory**, **descriptive** or **verificative/explicative**. Here we argue that these three different ways of treating information do not necessarily have to be excluding but belonging to one same process, the first (exploratory) belonging to an initial stage, the second (descriptive) to an intermediary stage, and the third (verificative/explicative) to an advanced stage.

As predictable, at the beginning, exploratory procedures were undertaken in our research. Then, analyses of the different meanings were undertaken which went further than that. A descriptive analysis of data and the unveiled meanings was performed giving basic and fundamental results and marking the paths to follow. Finally, research reached a verificative/explicative stage in the search for meaning, in which the question "why" was intended to be answered taking into account different contextual parameters alien to the data themselves that would enable the researcher to give meaning to the whole and verify the initial hypothesis.

As Piñuel (2002) contends, "only verificative/explicative analysis can make inferences about the origin, nature, way of functioning and effects of the communicative products". For example, inducing a prediction, to prove a content through an effect or unveil the antecedents of the communicative means can only be done by verificative/explicative analysis which goes further than simple exploratory, descriptive result presentation.

According to Piñuel (2002), analysis of content attains both "models of representation" and a "cognitive pattern". Actually, the "continent materials" do not convey any message in

themselves, the meaning exists in the mind of the person, in this case the tourist, and it is the task of the researcher to unveil it or at least try to understand it.

2.3.8. The process of content analysis

According to Krippendorff (1980), content analysis process starts with six questions it must address to be performed adequately which concern the data themselves, their producers and context, and the research objectives and limitations:

- 1) Which data are analysed?
- 2) How are they defined?
- 3) What is the population from which they are drawn?
- 4) What is the context relative to which the data are analysed?
- 5) What are the boundaries of the analysis?
- 6) What is the target of the inferences?

This research considers all these aspects and addresses them in previous and subsequent sections.

Content analysis, as a methodological technique, is a process which follows different steps. Content analysis research must be prepared prior to analysis. The steps of content analysis research (which need not be in this order), according to Piñuel (2002), are:

- a) The selection of the communicative means that will be studied (see section 2.2.1)
 - b) The selection of the categories that will be used to classify information (see section 2.3.9)
 - c) The selection of the analysis units (see section 2.3.11), and
 - d) The selection of a counting or measuring system (see section 2.3.11)
- In this case, when dealing with online data, a fifth step must be added:
- e) The selection of analysis software (see section 2.3.12)

This research followed Piñuel's (2002) process of content analysis, as explained in previous and subsequent sections. Once these five aspects were addressed and content analysis chosen as the technique of study "the approach proceeds with data preparation, identification of key variables, obtaining the word-frequency matrix, and subsequent dimensional reduction of word-frequency data" (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

As an example of an applied process of online textual information content analysis, Opoku (2006) goes through the following steps:

1. Selection of the Computer-Aided Text Analysis (CATA) software.
2. Selection of the unit of analysis.
3. Selection of competitive samples of websites for analysis.
4. Design of a rigorous dictionary of terms by collecting and compiling synonyms of evaluative criteria.
5. Data collection
6. Use of software to convert data into electronic format and categorize the data according to the evaluative criteria.
7. Cross-tabulate the categorical data and aggregate the number of words identified by the analysis software.

8. Establish the dependency between rows and columns.
9. Decide upon the number of dimensions to retain for further analysis and justify this.
10. Present the row and column profiles graphically in a two-way dimensional space with each or more of the dimensions representing a different region. Each brand/product/organization is expected to be positioned in this space according to its profile.
11. Interpretation of the correspondence maps.
12. Make meaning of the interpretations.

2.3.9. Selection of the categories of analysis

Content analysis examines textual data for patterns and structures, singles out the key features to which researchers wish to pay attention, develops categories, and aggregates them into perceptible constructs in order to seize text meaning (Gray and Densten 1998; Shoemaker and Reese 1996 as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). A fundamental characteristic of content analysis is that it summarizes characteristics of messages for different cases (Neuendorf, 2002). According Neuendorf (2002), the central idea in textual content analyses is that “the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories. Each category may consist of one, several, or many words. Words, phrases, or other units of text classified in the same category are presumed to have similar meanings. Depending on the purposes of the researcher, this similarity may be based on the precise meaning of the words (such as grouping synonyms together), or may be based on words sharing similar connotations (such as grouping together several words implying a concern with a concept [...]).”

In thematic content analyses, information is usually classified into different topics or categories according to the objectives and nature of the research and its objectives. Such categorization is crucial since without a good structure, content analysis results ineffective. Building appropriate categories for the case and purpose of study is fundamental to conduct successful content analysis. For Stemler (2001), two fatal flaws destroy the utility of content analysis, which are faulty definitions of categories and non-mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories. Therefore, a basic starting point about categories is that categories must be mutually exclusive, one code must apply to one unit of information (Gao, 1996, as cited in Stemler, 2001; Neuendorf, 2002). To build categories, the concepts of categories themselves and the words within them must not be repeated, to perform reliable analysis.

In quantitative content analyses, there are **two main approaches** of creating categories:

- The **substitution model** (Weber, 1983) or *a priori* categorization (Stemler, 2001) in which categories are pre-established by the researcher (Stemler, 2001) and obtained deductively. Text analysis categories are understood from the substitution tradition as “a group of words with *similar* meaning and/or connotations” (Weber 1983). Deductive or *a priori* category application occurs when already formed categories are assigned to databased on theoretical background or already created frameworks (Banyai & Glover, 2011). “Various categories are organized into dictionaries, which are used for making necessary substitutions in the text and for obtaining category frequency counts. These frequencies are organized in a matrix, and associations/correlations between categories can be calculated” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

- The **correlational model** (Weber, 1983) or emergent categorization (Stemler, 2001), in which the first categories are created from the data themselves (Stemler, 2001) in an inductive way. Contrarily, the correlational model determines categories from the text analysed (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). In this tradition, categories are “groups of words with *different* meaning or connotations that taken together refer to some theme or issue” (Weber, 1983). “These themes are extracted from the matrix of word frequencies by means of factor analysis or other data-reduction technique” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

In the present research, an approach close to the substitution model was applied. Categories were built *a priori* in relation to certain topics conforming tourist image: attraction factors, cultural identity, feelings, territorial presence. Each of these general topics conveys subcategories formed by keywords related to that subcategory. *A priori* categorization was implicitly used by Wenger (2008) and Carson (2008) when analysing travel blogs (Banyai & Glover, 2007). Stepchenkova et al. (2009) stressed the importance of having firmly defined the pool of variables prior to actual counting. Moreover, as noted by Stepchenkova et al. (2009), Neuendorf (2002) strongly argued for a deductive approach where “all decisions on variables, their measurement, and coding rules must be made before the observation begins”. Deductive categorization (*a priori*) is reliable in the sense that it is stable and reproducible according to Krippendorff (1980) and Weber (1983) (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). It is stable when the same content is coded more than once by the same coder in the same way and reproducible when a second coding researcher classifies the same content in the same way. In our research, categorization was mainly designed deductively, “*a priori*” to be able to target and analyse specific aspects of the destination.

Authors such as Stepchenkova et al. (2009) acknowledge the possibility of combining deductive and inductive reasoning for category creation. In this respect, although the main design of categories was made *a priori*, focusing on the aspects this research wishes to address, the categories were also adapted and adjusted to the data throughout the analysis to fit better the analysis objectives and to be able to visualize the results better. As in Wenger (2008) and Carson (2008), the creation of themes of analysis was a more qualitative process of interpretation and understanding of previous literature and data (Banyai & Glover, 2011).

The process of categorization for this study was as follows: we first thought about the aspects of the case study area image to study with the study purposes in mind, revised literature in search of useful analysis categorization, and proposed categories. Categories were exhaustively described too. However, some inductive creation of categories also took place as some categories were readapted and some of them merged to focus more precisely on the studied themes, having read through the data.

Our purpose of categories is to identify elements of the tourist destination-image construct within travel blogs and reviews and in OTWs. As previously explained, tourist image is formed by different components (see section 1.2.2.2) and different aspects and elements can be studied through it. In this research, we aim to analyse the image around a specific geographic area and its sub-regional brand territories, and how image and identity are distributed among the different sub-regions of the study case. We aim to identify which

elements are the attraction factors to the study case area and its sub-regions, the positive and negative feelings and the attributes to which they are related, and the cultural identity references and elements to which they are bound.

- Review of categories of former studies.

To be able to build adequate categories, an overview on the topics the bloggers and reviewers write about was performed. As Pühringer and Taylor (2008) point out, “T-blog content and themes can be highly variable, even across discrete entries made by an individual user”. To create categories according to blog text, the topics appearing regularly within the blogs should be first studied. The topics within these pages seem to relate to general themes such as climate, cuisine, transport or regional specific stereotypes (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Common topics discussed are “places and attractions visited, tours and transport, people met, the climate, wildlife and scenery, Aboriginal cultural sites, activities undertaken, and meals and accommodation”(Carson, 2008). According to Carson’s (2008) study “climate, wildlife and scenery attracted the most opinion statements”. For the purpose of this research, especially relevant are the themes that can be particular or specific to Catalonia, that identify it; that is to say places and attractions mentioned, as well as the elements of wildlife, scenery, autochthonous culture and activities undertaken. Instead, more conjectural aspects such as transport and accommodation, very common in travel reviews, are not of the interest of this research as they are not specific to the area of study, they are necessary elements when travelling but not significant for the case of study nor in general for the purpose of the trip.

In the case of the analysis of textual online data, Stepchenkova et al. (2009) note that “a number of previous studies employed sorting and categorization techniques to identify the frequencies of certain concepts, words, or people in destination promotional materials and treated the most frequent ones as variables, or dimensions, of the destination-image construct” among which the authors mention Andsager & Drzewiecka (2002), Dann, (1996), MacKay & Fesenmaier (1997). These words are often referred to as key words, or image variables.

According to Echtner (2002), “the set of image variables can contain nouns, verbs, and descriptors because nouns are used to focus attention on attractions (e.g., museums), verbs describe actions or tourism types (e.g., rafting), and descriptors create atmosphere (e.g., exciting)”. This distinction between nouns, verbs and descriptors is very important for our research, as the categories were built upon this type of keywords. Some categories contained mostly nouns, others mostly nouns and verbs, and some others mainly descriptors. This first distinction gives rise to category creation by dividing words into attractions, actions and tourism types and ‘atmosphere’ descriptors. Whether specific for online texts or not, for example, Pan et al. (2007) coded using two dimensions: the aspects of the tourism amalgam model of Cooper (2005) and the orientation of the sentences (either positive or negative).

- Geography-related categories:

To the knowledge of the author, few studies analysing travel blogs have incorporated categories to spot different destinations within a wider territory. Territorial categories seem

to have been little used among blog research because these analyses are often based on a single destination at one geographic level, and location or regional categories in these cases become useless.

One of the few studies with this type of categories is Carson (2008), studying the Northern Territory of Australia, who included a category called “locations”, which gathers different destinations within the region. Similarly Koerte (2009), who studied Tanzania’s tourist image, introduced a category called “attractions”, where some cities, municipalities, but also destinations such as national parks were included. Wenger (2008) too, included themes such as “sights and attractions visited” which comprise destinations.

Other Internet-based studies, instead, addressed the territorial issue of destination identification more deeply. A study by Stepchenkova and Morrison (2006) addressed tour-operators’ website texts and identified destinations within Russia mentioned most frequently by U.S. and Russian tour operators. Independently, a master list of 344 tourist destinations within Russia was compiled based on the standard division of the country into thirteen recreational regions (Goscomstat 2000, as cited in Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006). In this study we see that territorial analysis becomes deeper with hierarchic classification of destinations into regions and sub-regions. Carson (2008), in his study of the Northern territory in Australia, identified information such as the structure of the total trip, including destinations visited, the order in which they were visited, and the length of stay in each destination.

We observed that studies on travel blogs and reviews do not provide insight into location identification in the sense they do not distinguish between municipalities and wider territories such as tourist brand regions when analysing blogs. Contrarily, in the case of official tourism websites, comparisons between different territories are conducted in more cases (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009; Pitt et al., 2007 and 2008; Huertas et al., 2010).

As our research is geographically based and comprises a wide territory with multiple destinations, it is fundamental to have categories concerning the territory, its different areas and destinations.

- Tourist attraction factors categories

As Richards (2002) pointed out, attractions, attraction systems and their markers are a central part of the tourism process, very often being the main reason for visiting a destination. We observed that to analyse attraction factors, unlike territorial-based categories, the majority of authors created thematic categories to study travel blog content in relation to a destination. Most of these categories could be described as attraction factors of the destination or aspects about it relevant to tourism.

We observed a general tendency within travel 2.0 and especially travel blogs and reviews, where users increasingly classify information and comment on specific attractions, instead of doing so more generally. Therefore, it is relevant to analyse this type of structure, which seems to be becoming popular.

Volo (2010b) used a thematic analysis as described by Ezzy (2002) that was applied to the online narratives and content analysis applied to blog platforms. Carson (2008) classified blog content into locations, activities, transport, products (including accommodation, attractions and tours) and events (meeting people, having a car accident, etc.). Wenger (2008), when studying blog entries about Austria, focused on themes including: season of the visit, motives for travel, sights and attractions visited, services used, modes of transport, problems encountered on the journey, and the images associated with Austria as a destination. The author identified themes and everything related to each theme was noted. Koerte (2009), in her analysis of official tourism websites and travel blogs, through CATPAC analysis, classified the keywords into eleven dimensions for projected image and eight for perceived image. The categories common to both projected and perceived images are: attractions, activities, culture, wildlife, transportation, natural environment, descriptive terms, and accommodation. Then the author added three dimensions for projected image: travel information, marketing, and business. Xiang et al. (2008) devised lists of pre-defined keywords for the study of City of Chicago travel blogs and grouped them into the following category themes: Accommodation, Activities, Areas, Attractions, Events, Information, Places, Restaurants, and Shopping.

If we compare these authors, Carson (2008), Xiang et al. (2008), Wenger (2008) and Koerte (2009), in terms of thematic categories, we see that Carson (2008) classifies textual information into types of words and themes, not the actual themes. That is to say, the author classifies some words into events, but does not ask what type or which events happened. Instead, Koerte (2009) performs a deeper analysis by creating categories that already distinguish different specific themes such as culture, but still some categories are very general. The case of Xiang et al. (2008) is between the two previous, as some of their categories are very general “activities” but some of them more specific “shopping” or “restaurants”. Wenger (2008) is perhaps the most specific author with thematic categorization, although the author’s focus is not on the same aspects.

Chen et al. (2008) in their study of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews employed the categories of Beerli and Martin (2004), which integrated destination image attributes into nine categories including natural resources, general infrastructure, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, political and economic factors, natural environment, social environment, and place atmosphere. Each category included several destination image attributes.

Other research, not dealing with blogs but with online tourist image (Govers et al., 2007a), identifies several image components that are repeated in several cases of study corresponding to different destinations; “these include the physical and natural surroundings (buildings/architecture, and nature/sea), cultural distance, weather/ climate conditions, activities on offer (shopping, water sports), and tourism facilitation (hotels)”. However, the authors stress that “for each destination, very specific unique image components can also be identified” (Govers et al., 2007a). This is very interesting as it suggests that when studying tourist image elements, the groups of elements or components should be adapted to the destination in question. In their specific case of Dubai, their unique elements were “the desert, wealth, luxury, life in the streets, the smell of various fragrances, sand, oil, and camels. Some components are holistic (such as Arab and Muslim culture) while

others are attribute based (availability and quality of beaches). Some are functional (like shopping) others more psychological (friendliness of the people)” (Govers et al., 2007a).

Therefore, in our research we intend to divide categories into distinctive themes by asking what is it they talk about specifically that can identify or characterize the destination, themes such as accommodation or transport that are related to any travel experience are too general and do not give enough specific information about the destination, therefore these types of themes were not included in our research. In our study, categories will be adapted to the specificities of the destination, some will be general and some concern unique features. This view is supported by Quan and Wang (2004 as cited in Volo 2010b) who suggested that tourists’ experiences are divided into two complementary types: core experiences (usually derived from attractions and being the motivator for tourism as contrasted with daily life experience) and supporting experiences (derived from the activities facilitating the peak experience, such as transportation, accommodation, and other additional services). In this research, the type of image we intended to tackle is that related to the core experience, the core image of attractions and travel motivations, and not the supportive activities such as transportation and accommodation that are mentioned in travel blogs, but are complementary to the core image. Authors such as Stepchenkova and Morrison (2006) also opted to exclude lodgings, hotels, and accommodation from the image-variable set.

In relation to the latter, and although our focus will be on text analysis, photographic analysis with categories is quite close to what we wish to do with key words: that is to go directly to themes about what is specifically said about the destination that identifies it.

Photographic content within travel blogs has also been classified into thematic categories by different authors. Although these categories are applied to photographs, they can be taken as a reference for text analysis categories. Choi et al. (2007) classify photographic content into: 1. Historic buildings and heritage, 2. Cultural events and facilities (museums, art centres, concerts, etc.), 3. Parks and gardens (places for relaxation from city life), 4. Shopping, 5. Tourism facilities and infrastructure (transportation facilities, hotels, convention facilities, etc.), 6. Entertainment and gaming, 7. Bird’s eye or natural views, 8. Local cuisine and dining, 9. Sports/recreation activities and festivals (e.g., Macau Grand Prix), 10. People and local residents, 11. Others (maps, flags, and other photographic images).

With similar categories, Krizman and Belullo (2007) classified photographs into nine themes: 1. Historic buildings and heritage, 2. Cultural events and art, 3. Local cuisine, 4. Old town (details or panoramic view), 5. Nature (details or panoramic view), 6. Tourism and recreation facilities, 7. People and local residents, 8. Map, 9. Others (flags, stems and other photographic images).

Planas (2009) categorized the content of photographs from the city of Girona based on the work of Dilley (1986). She proposes: 1. Heritage or cultural elements of the destination (1.1 monuments, 1.2 museums, 1.3 heritage complex, 1.4 heritage fragment or element, 1.5 museum piece, 1.6 square or street). 2. Culture, traditions and lifestyle (2.1 gastronomy, 2.2 Catalan flags, 2.3 legends). 3. Tourism services (3.1 restaurants, 3.2 transport, 3.3

accommodation, 3.4 shops, 3.5 other services). 4. Nature (urban nature spaces). 5. Activities or actions.

This type of categorization is very useful as it classifies information into what we could call attraction factors or tourist themes, and even tourism modalities.

- Good vs. bad feelings and opposite concepts

Apart from thematic categorization (attraction factors) and geographical categorization (destinations and brands), some authors classify textual content into positive and negative connotations, or opposite concepts. Roberts 2000 (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009) calls it to “embellish” the data “with secondary variables that measure the source’s positive or negative sentiment regarding each theme”.

Studying the sense of entity or polarity (positive, neutral or negative), sense of text was performed by several authors. This type of performance was conducted on offline texts such as in the study of Stepchenkova, Chen and Morrison (2007) where information about China and Russia within U.S. newspapers was classified into positive, neutral or negative senses (as explained in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). This was done within analysis of travel blog texts. Carson (2008) searched for the sense of the entity (positive, negative, neutral) with a detailed search reading through the blogs. Pan et al. (2007) coded the information looking for the positive or negative orientation of the sentences. Similarly Crotts et al. (2009) classified the emotional stance in the narratives into: happy, neutral or unhappy. Waldhör (2007) performed a linguistic analysis of text and identified utterances within text by giving sentences a polarity (positive, neutral or negative) and a certain strength depending on the weight of the term in relation to its context. Waldhör (2007) went further and suggested giving different weights if words are accompanied by terms such as “very” or “not”. “The whole situation becomes increasingly complex as the power computation gets more complicated if you think of utterances like “very dirty”, “not very dirty”, “not dirty” involving adjectives with a basic negative polarity compared to utterances like “very nice”, “not nice” and “not very nice” (Waldhör, 2007).

With regard to detecting value and intention behind blog text it must be said that diary-like travel blogs, unlike the ones oriented at product reviews or commercial purposes, have a relatively “neutral” and descriptive content. As Carson (2008) explains, much of the commentary is value-free and simply identifies sites and attractions or describes particular events in certain places. The author also explains that “blog entries tended to develop a ‘mood’ such that the content was consistently favourable (each place visited was ‘awesome’ or ‘spectacular’) or unfavourable (every purchase was ‘too expensive’ and every activity ‘boring’)”. Positive moods were more common than negative ones.

Complex linguistic analyses for polarity such as Waldhör’s (2007) were not used in the present research, but positive and negative moods and adjectives were identified. All the previous research validates the importance of gathering positive and negative feelings and also the importance of the weight of certain words in relation to their context. It is really valuable to know at least if the feelings tourists have about a place, activity, and event are positive or negative. In this regard, when analysing the sample of sentences related to

Catalan language, as only 40 definitions existed, the researcher identified whether they had positive, neutral or negative connotations (see section 2.4.2.4). Other authors used attributes, adjectives and opposite concepts to describe the affective image component. For example, “if the research aims to find affective images that potential travellers have about a particular destination, the key words to look for would be descriptors like *beautiful*, *friendly*, *ancient*, and so on” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009).

Opposite concepts (dichotomies) relevant to the tourism phenomenon or to Catalonia were introduced and used in this research in order to see which of them identify the destination and the sub-destination within it. These opposite concepts were based on the adjectives and opposite concepts proposed by Son (2005), Russell and Pratt (1980), Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) and Baloglu and McCleary (1999) to analyse the “affective” (but also the cognitive) component of tourist destination image.

Russell and Pratt (1980) developed a spatial model of eight adjectives that described the affective image component. Russell and Pratt (1980) proposed some positive adjectives: exciting, arousing, pleasant and relaxing, and some negative adjectives: sleepy, distressing, unpleasant and gloomy, around which the affective component of image revolves. These adjectives, and their opposite concepts, were used in this research. The relevance of concepts such as safety (safe or unsafe) and price (expensive or cheap) were based on the works of Andreu et al. (2001) and Baloglu and McCleary (1999). Concepts related to “relaxing” or “exciting” were extracted from the work of Baloglu and McCleary (1999) on perceptual/cognitive items and travel motivation items to study tourist image formation. Other opposite concepts arise from the necessities and interests of this research.

- Cultural identity references

No studies known to the author were found specifically to study the cultural identity issues within tourist image of travel blogs and reviews and contrasted identity references associated to a destination or territory. In the case of official tourism websites, Huertas et al. (2010) built some content categories specific to cultural identity differentiation of culturally distinct regions within larger states (Catalonia and Wales). The categories related to cultural identity references Huertas et al. (2010) obtained were: language and culture, uniqueness and originality, popular festivals, cuisine, customs and traditions, history and culture and myths and legends. Mariné-Roig (2011b), in her study about souvenirs in Barcelona, classifies them according to their cultural identity background: Catalan-Barcelona, Spanish, globalized or other identities; that is to say from a local identity background to a global identity. As Weber (1990) asserts, one of the main objectives of content analysis is to “reflect cultural patterns of groups, institutions, or societies”, and thus this research aims to contribute to this literature gap in online media. This research gave an approach to this subject by identifying the territorial identity reference the tourists have, and also what elements are associated with the destination’s identity and to what cultural identity range they belong.

- Proposing categories for analysis (Application)

With the study purposes in mind, and considering the previous literature about categorization, we created different categories which are divided into different groups: the tourist attraction factors and the cultural identity groups, which respond to the cognitive component analysis; the feelings and opposite attributes group, which responds to the affective component (and is also partially related to the conative component), and the geography category group which responds to the spatial component of image that articulates the rest of components around certain places. The final categorization responds to the needs of the research and to the nature of data itself.

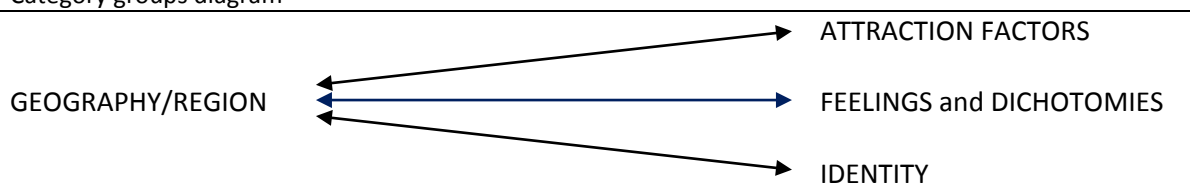
In this case, four different groups of categories were created to extract the content of the region and sub-regions of study and to see how they relate to each other:

- a) Geography: region and sub-region,
- b) Attraction factors,
- c) Cultural identity elements,
- d) Feelings and opposite concepts.

Each of the four major groups of categories have subcategories which could be valid for any destination, and some subcategories which are unique to the case study. Concerning the latter, we observed that many studies used very general categories, probably too general. In the present study we followed Weber's (1990) advice, who explains that depending on the purpose of the research it makes more sense to use much narrower or specific categories. Therefore general groups of categories were created, and some specific and non-specific subcategories were also created for the areas of study. Koerte (2009) also opted for this choice and organizes the information into dimensions based on past research and dimensions specific to her case of study (Tanzania).

The categories were crossed or related according to the diagram in Figure 2.4:

Figure 2.4
Category groups diagram



Source: Author

The geographical space (brands and destinations) becomes the basis of category combinations and location. In creating category definitions, two decisions must be taken: whether categories are to be mutually exclusive, and how narrow or broad the categories are to be (Weber, 1983). In our case study, categories and the concepts within them were mutually exclusive as a general rule, however some concepts among factor attractions and cultural identity elements overlapped (as some cultural identity elements are also attraction factors of the destination). Therefore all categories except those two were mutually exclusive. Therefore no relationships were established between the category groups of attraction factors and cultural identity references.

a) Geography: region and sub-region

In this study, we wanted to see what the image of Catalonia is, not only as a whole but also in the different destinations and tourist brand territories; therefore, specific categories for the study case destination and the different brand sub-regions were constructed. Moreover, these categories are not only the basis for seeing what is said about Catalonia, but where it is located.

As previously explained, we adopted the sub-regional spatial division of the Catalan Tourist Brands. The geographic groups of words or categories consisted of all the Catalan tourist brands and all the municipalities and destinations within them. Each of these word groups is formed by the name of the brand and all the names of the municipalities and towns it includes (retrieved from Gencat.cat) and some prominent tourist destinations within other municipalities which were included as separate entities (e.g. “La Pineda” a separate tourist entity of the Vila-seca municipality in Costa Daurada brand). In this case study:

- Barcelona
- Catalunya Central
- Costa Barcelona
- Costa Brava
- Costa Daurada
- Pirineus and Vall d’Aran
- Terres de l’Ebre
- Terres de Lleida

Note that two brands (Pirineus and Vall d’Aran) were merged into one due to their territorial proximity and low presence of Travel blogs and reviews about them.

b) Attraction factors

Tourist attraction factors of Catalonia were divided into different attraction factor groups. There are eight basic/general factor attraction groups which are general categories gathering similar attraction factors. These eight basic groups were divided into several sub-groups, with a total of 31 specific attraction factors. Some of the eight basic groups do not have any sub-groups within them and some others have several sub-groups when it has been judged more suitable. These groups of attraction factors were based on studies mentioned in the methodology and also on the Turisme de Catalunya (Catalonia Tourist Board) division of themes and attraction factors of Catalonia in their website.

Analysis was performed for both the eight basic/general groups to have a more general view of what were the attraction factors mentioned in travel blogs and reviews and OTWs and for the 31 specific subcategories (see Table 2.8).

See the keywords in each category in Annex B.2. Eight general attraction factors keywords and Annex B.3. Thirty-one specific attraction factors

Table 2.8
 Attraction factor categories

8 GENERAL ATTRACTION FACTORS GROUP	31 SPECIFIC ATTRACTION FACTORS GROUPS
1. Food and Wine	1.1 Food and drinks
	1.2 Wine
2. Intangible Heritage	2. Intangible heritage
3. Leisure and Recreation	3.1 Nightlife and partying
	3.2 Theme Parks
	3.3 Wellness
	3.4 Theatres/spectacle/cinemas/music
	3.5 Leisure remaining words
4. Nature and Active tourism	4.1 Nature elements and places
	4.2 Nature sports & active tourism
	4.3 Rural landscape
	4.4 Nature remaining words
5. Sports	5.1 FC Barcelona
	5.2 Sporting events/watching
	5.3 Other sports
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	6. Sun, Sea, Sand + nautical
7. Tangible Heritage	7.1 Buildings and architecture
	7.2 Gaudí
	7.3 Artists
	7.4 Art, design, art styles
	7.5 Museums
	7.6 Archaeological sites
	7.7 History/industrial
	7.8 Military/castles
	7.9 Monuments/sculptures
	7.10 Religious heritage
	7.11 Culture remaining words
8. Urban environment	8.1 Shopping
	8.2 Barcelona attractions
	8.3 Other city attractions
	8.4 Urban tourism/general sites

Source: Author

c) Feelings and opposite concepts/dichotomies

In this group of categories we find:

1. Opposite feelings: which are represented by Good vs. Bad feelings: this category compares several good feelings with bad feelings. The list of good and bad feelings or concepts was extracted from standard lists in American and British English. These categories were used to see if bloggers mentioned more positively associated adjectives and concepts or negative ones.

2. Opposite concepts/dichotomies: this category comprises several opposite concepts. The lists of the words within each opposite concept were mainly built using the Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms. Other concepts close to an opposite word appearing within the blogs were added to the list. Table 2.9 shows the different dichotomies:

Table 2.9.
Feelings and opposite concepts categories

01 Good feelings	02 Bad feelings
03 Love	04 Hate
05 Beautiful	06 Ugly
07 Pleasant	08 Unpleasant
09 Friendly	10 Unfriendly
11 Fun/interesting	12 Boring
13 Lively	14 Gloomy
15 Noisy	16 Quiet
17 Full	18 Empty
19 Orderly	20 Chaotic
21 Clean	22 Dirty
23 Relax	24 Distress
25 Authentic	26 Inauthentic
27 New/Fashionable	28 Old/old-fashioned
29 Cheap	30 Expensive
31 Modest/poor	32 Luxurious/wealthy
33 Safe	34 Unsafe

See the keywords in each category in Annex B.4. Feelings and dichotomies keywords

d) Cultural identity elements

This group of categories is divided into different themes:

1. Territorial identity reference: geographic, cultural and linguistic identity reference mentioned by tourists and OTWs. The objective of this category is to see which is the immediate territorial reference the tourists refer to when traveling to Catalonia in comparison to the geographical references provided by OTWs:

- Catalan
- Spanish
- Mediterranean
- European
- Global

2. The second group of categories refers to different aspects related to cultural or ethnic identity elements. This category aims to discover what elements of cultural identity the tourists mention and consider relevant, and whether these elements can be considered autochthonous or not. The different groups with several cultural identity elements (or keyword groups within them) are:

- Celebrations
- Traditions/folklore
- Dances and music
- Gastronomy
- Drinks

See the keywords in each category in Annex B.5. Cultural identity keywords.

2.3.10. Key words within categories

In the present research all the general categories are formed by subcategories. Each of the subcategories consists of a list of keywords related to a theme. The idea is similar to that of Koerte (2009) who detected 75 keywords and then made a frequency count of them. Koerte (2009) reviewed the text, and attractions and keywords were coded for consistent results. In our case, keywords were also detected (not all words were included in the analysis, only significant ones or key words), but we placed these keywords in categories and subcategories, and therefore word counts in a second stage of the analysis were done for entire categories (see section 2.3.9)

The process of including the key words in the categories followed two complementary criteria (inductive and deductive).

The first criterion (inductive) was to include significant words with a minimum weight within categories. This criterion was used by Pan et al. (2007) who gathered keywords appearing at least four times in blogs. In our case, as the sample of travel blogs is much wider, the criteria were to include significant words appearing at least twenty times in the whole sample of travel blogs and reviews. However, this approach is criticized by Macnamara (2003) who asserted that “bias is more easily introduced into research when key words are defined from the text –that is, when the inductive approach to variable identification is used” (Macnamara, 2003 as cited in Stepchenkova et al. 2009).

Therefore, a second criterion was applied (deductive). Several documents on tourism in Catalonia were consulted (Official documents of the Catalan Tourist Board, The Tourist Atlas of Catalonia, etc.) to browse for important words that had not yet been included in categories. This second step consisted of including words of special relevance for the destination or words being part of a closed list for analysis. In this case, words that were mentioned only a few times, or even none, were included if they had a contrasted special relevance for the tourist image of the case study (in the different documents consulted) and allowed the possibility of contrast with other concepts (for example the word “sardana”, a Catalan traditional dance). Other words that belonged to closed lists were also included regardless their weight (for example a village name within the list of villages belonging to a brand). This second criterion of analysis assures that the categories could be used again in the future to study the same case of study as both words having a certain statistical weight and words with a special relevance were included enabling category reuse and replicability. Choi et al. (2007) pointed out that content analysis studies must, among others, answer the question: “is my study replicable?” In this case, this study could be replicable for the same territory and for English-language blogs, but the same categories could serve as a basis for other destination studies as many of the words related to specific attraction factors or feelings do not change at all. Therefore, with some changes, and adaptation to a new case of study, this research analysis could be replicated.

Words that could be confusing because of their multiple meanings or language crossings were not included to keep the categories as clear as possible. For example the word “angles” is both a village in Catalonia (Anglès) and the English word referring to “a corner whether constituting a projecting part or a partially enclosed space” (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

Moreover, many studies created dictionaries to merge similar words: for example, big, huge, massive (would be merged together in a single keyword). This was the case, for example, of Stepchenkova and Morrison (2006) who build dictionaries to merge different words into single keywords. In the present case, this problem was solved with the creation of our categories. In our case, any word, synonymous or not of another, could be included within a category as long as it is related to that theme, without the need to create dictionaries. If a word belongs to a certain category it is added without modifying text by substituting similar words with others. In this sense synonyms might be located in the same category and therefore all important concepts were gathered. To see the full list of words included in each category see Annex B.

2.3.11. Analysis units and counting or measuring system

- Analysis units: Keywords

In our research the wider level of analysis units are on the one hand travel blog and review entries and on the other hand official tourism website files or html pages. One entry or one file/page is one unit or one individual. These entries have a natural boundary between them.

The smaller analysis units are **words**, in this case (single words or composite words) from which later, categories of multiple keywords were built and in turn became units of analysis. Opoku (2006) chose words as the unit of analysis and justified this election because words contained in the websites reflected what their creators think are important attributes or characteristics (in an explicit way), and they assumed that the relative frequency with which particular words were used on a website is an indication of how the message sender is focusing on a particular image dimension.

Researchers encountered many difficulties in content analysing online texts due to keyword issues, especially in the case of User-Generated Contents. These difficulties concern misspellings, synonyms, multiword concepts, and singular or plural forms (Stepchenkova et al., 2009) to which homographs and negative forms could be added. These problems related to keywords should be addressed prior to any content analysis.

Misspellings were addressed in this research during the database debugging phase (see 2.2.6). With regard to **synonyms**, studies such as Krizman and Belullo (2007) and Opoku (2006) transformed synonyms (and misspelled words) into one word or root to avoid problems. Concerning **singular or plural forms**, Choi et al. (2007) suggested replacing plurals with singulars, and past tense with present tense to obtain interpretable results of “text-mining analysis”; Krizman and Belullo (2007) replaced some plural words with their singular forms (e.g. “hotels” with “hotel”). However, we observed that these two problems occurred because text analysis usually relies only on specific keywords and concepts and not on categories. These two problems were solved in our study by the system of classifying keywords into categories or groups of keywords. Replacing plurals with singulars was not necessary because, when significant, the two words (plural and singular form) were incorporated in the same category. Synonyms too, when relevant, were placed in the same category.

Regarding **homographs**, some authors contend that the only way to determine the intended meaning of possible homographs is to scan the original data for all occurrences of the word

(Insch & Moore, 1997 as in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). In this research as the sample is very large, not all blog entries could be scanned in the search for homographs. Instead, the problem of homographs was addressed, again through categorization, by not incorporating to categories keywords that could lead to confusion because of their multiple meanings. The destination names were especially checked in this respect.

As far as **negative** forms are concerned, “negatives are also difficult to deal with, because the negation and the actual word can be separated by a large number of other words (e.g., “I don’t think that I would feel safe there”); one way to deal with negative concepts would be “to reverse negative statements to commonality with positives” (Ryan & Cave 2005, as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). The problem of negatives did not affect our research very deeply as most categories dealt with concepts represented by keywords (such as locations, attraction factors, identity elements) that did not have a positive or negative sense. However, when dealing with feelings, and positive and negative attributes, we tried to use insofar as possible the adjectives that were usually only used positively or negatively (amazing vs. disgusting, for example) and did not lead to doubt. Some negative forms have been transformed into composite words (example: ‘not nice’). Despite these considerations, we acknowledge some margin of error due to possible negative forms that must be assumed by researchers when dealing with Language (a subjective, arbitrary expression).

Concerning **multiword concepts**, Choi et al. (2007) suggested grouping two or more words into one in the case of multiword concepts so that they would not be counted separately. In our case, this problem was solved by creating a list of composite words so that later they would be counted together (See Annex B.6. Composite words).

- Counting or measuring system: frequency counts

When performing a quantitative content analysis of text, and the unit of analysis is keywords, the measures are often obtained through word counts or frequency counts of words and phrases. Frequency counts are seen as a measuring system to apply content analysis. “The assumption made is that the words that are mentioned most often are the words that reflect the greatest concerns” (Stemler, 2001). However, the author points out that although this might be true in some cases, there are several counterpoints in using simply word frequency counts to make inferences on certain issues, as the use of synonyms, words with multiple meanings or words misrepresenting a concept might distort the results (Stemler, 2001). All these are issues must be dealt with when using word frequency counts.

Authors who use word counts are: Opoku (2006), Choi et al. (2007), Pan et al. (2007), Broillet and Dubosson (2008), Koerte (2009). Koerte (2009) does so specifically to reveal projected and perceived images of a destination. With this technique, “the highest frequencies represent the words which were used most often on the selected blogs”. For instance, Broillet and Dubosson (2008) perform a content analysis of different discourses within blogs through counting the frequency of words through specific software; Pan et al. (2007) count both word and phrase occurrence and frequency. Koerte (2009) copies and pastes content into a word document and then revises it manually by detecting and coding attractions and keywords.

On the one hand, these words (keywords) are specified for counting by means of an input table (or a dictionary) constructed by the researcher (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). On the other, after the word counts these words must be classified into categories through a **coding** process. The coding process consists of classifying several words into categories.

Broillet and Dubosson (2008) used a coding process that seems to be generally applicable. After the word count, these researchers allocated these words to categories or groups. Then, the categories underwent a kind of perception control process by all research members. In the cases of Broillet and Dubosson (2008) and of Pan et al. (2007), the process of coding and categorization was controlled by the independent coding of two different researchers. These researchers created topic categories according to their own content analysis of blogs without prior discussion. Sentences containing positive and negative nuances were also coded and classified. Then an amalgam of both coding trees was used and a master coding scheme constructed (Pan et al., 2007). In our case, categories were decided *a priori* and then the keywords that went in each category were also checked by two researchers.

The issue of coding has to do with reliability as “to make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent: Different people should code the same text in the same way”, “a variable is valid to the extent that it measures or represents what the investigator intends it to measure” (Weber, 1983). According to Stemler (2001), keyword coding should achieve Stability or intra-rater reliability (when the same coder get the same results try after try) and Reproducibility, or inter-rater reliability (when coding schemes lead to the same text being coded in the same category by different people).

Stepchenkova et al. (2009) went one step further and after preparing the data, they identified the key variables (*a priori*) obtaining the word-frequency matrix and subsequent reduction of word-frequency data. They obtained a matrix of word frequencies from multiple units of qualitative data, which allowed more sophisticated analysis and hypothesis testing. “Obtaining a matrix of word frequencies from multiple units of qualitative data allows more sophisticated statistical analyses of data and, ultimately, hypothesis testing” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). These authors criticize the content analysis used in tourism studies for being too simplistic and being repeatedly limited to simple word-frequency counts. In the present study we contributed to improving this weakness with the creation of a complex matrix, with each blog being a unit and also by using computer-assisted content analysis. We also contributed to achieving more complex analysis by focusing on categories or keyword group analysis and comparison, instead of simple keywords.

2.3.12. Selection of Site Content Analyzer software

In the following section we develop the process of selecting the most appropriate software for the purposes of this research. The software we selected and used to perform the data content analysis was: Site Content Analyzer (for content analysis of keywords). In addition to that, we used a utility of Java language to process strings (constructing a general matrix with all the word counts for each blog entry) and IBM SPSS Statistics (to create a matrix with categories and statistically analyse the matrix with the category data).

- Software used in related studies

Despite the criticisms on the use of computerized quantitative content analysis -loss of the blogs' reflection of reality, loss of meaning, de-contextualization and misinterpretation of words (Banyai & Glover, 2011)- computerized analysis seems to be the only feasible solution to evaluate large samples of online data, in constant growth, and to have an approximate, but well-fundamented, perspective of the content of travel blogs and reviews in particular, but also of official tourism website content. "The large volumes of digital textual data available and the repetitiveness of the task make the computer a natural and powerful choice for content analysis" (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). These authors claim that tourism researchers are somehow reluctant to perform computer-assisted content analysis and that its adoption has been slow. However, it was observed that a growing body of content analysis frequency counts are performed through specific software (Broillet & Dubosson, 2008).

Waldhör (2007) explains the advantages of software-based support for scanning blog entries. The author explains that because of the continuous explosion and expansion of blogs, inspecting blogs becomes an ongoing task which may become boring and repetitive for humans and may miss important details after a while reading. Instead, software programmes are especially good at repetitive jobs, adaptable to new parameters. Humans may also bias results by overestimating the occurrence of specific items according to their experiences. Software will not bias the results depending on the number of entries that require monitoring, and the information will be adequately stored in databases. Similarly, Stepchenkova et al. (2009) explain that "computers can reduce quite effectively the tedium of data preparation and the time necessary for handling large volumes of textual data". Opoku (2006) uses CATA software and assesses that the advantages of computerized content analysis over manual content analysis are that computerization allows the manipulation of large data sets, it reduces time and cost of analyses and it addresses several of the reliability concerns associated with manual coding. According to the author, the use of network concepts has been one of the most exciting developments of the past few years in CATA research.

However, Stepchenkova et al. (2009) pin-point some inconveniencies in the process of computer-aided text content analyses: discerning categories and reducing dimensions continue to be problems with this type of analysis. Moreover, "no single software Package is currently able to provide the full spectrum of functions that might be needed in various content-analysis projects". Therefore combinations of different software seem inevitable.

In particular, Stepchenkova et al. (2009) explain the usefulness of **CATA** (Computer-Aided-Text-Analysis) software for textual content analysis performances. CATA software consists of different computerized programmes "used for storage, search, and retrieval of textual data". It can also assist in theme identification and coding, a time-consuming, prone-to-error "bottleneck" of the content-analysis process (Romano et al. 2003) that is amplified when a large number of cases have to be processed (Macnamara 2003; Wickham and Woods 2005)" (as cited in Stepchenkova et al., 2009). A study by Stepchenkova and Mills of 154 studies of destination image research published between 2000 and 2007 revealed that only six of them used CATA programmes for data analysis. One of the main reasons for this reluctance is the

lack of software functionality, “which precludes using a single specific software product for the entire cycle of the content analysis project” (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). Furthermore, in some cases, it is not apparent to the reader whether any CATA software was used at all (Stepchenkova et al. 2009). Our research also intends to contribute to fulfilling such gap in the literature.

Different studies using CATA software for tourism image analysis are, among others: Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002), Ryan and Cave (2005), Opoku (2006), Stepchenkova & Morrison (2006), Govers et al. (2007a, 2007b), Pan et al. (2007).

The different CATA software used by other authors were reviewed:

TextAnalyst (Megaputer) is a specialized CATA software for text, specifically semantic analysis, navigation, and search of unstructured texts. TextAnalyst (Megaputer Intelligence, 2005) can be used to generate semantic networks from communication content. It deals with large amounts of information and distils the meaning of a text in a concise form. It was used by Pan et al. (2007) to analyse word and phrase occurrence and frequency. Pan et al. (2007) generated a semantic network of bloggers’ experiences from the analysis of the full text of all the travel blogs for the Charleston area using TextAnalyst.

TextStat 3.0 (20-09-2009) can, among others, perform analysis of the content of a net of websites and word frequency counts. According to the producers the programme, it reads plain text files (in different encodings) and HTML files (directly from the Internet) and it produces word frequency lists and concordances from these files. Thanks to Unicode, the software is multilingual. Govers et al. (2007) use Textstat in addition to the automated content analyses to unveil the meaning of keywords in function of syntax and semantics. “This software provides a text search utility that aligns all sentences using a specific word according to right- or left-hand context, with the searched word positioned in the middle. This makes interpretation easy and resulted in the additional descriptors to frequently used words” (Govers et al., 2007a). This programme has several strong points such as the capacity to read text directly from websites in html without the need to transform it or copy-paste it. However, it only works with one file at a time and is not very powerful to work with large quantities of information.

WordStat is used to perform text content analysis on official tourism websites by Opoku (2006) and Pitt et al. (2007).

The **Leximancer** package is used by Pitt et al. (2008) for text analysis purposes of several official tourism websites to assess brand success. This study used the Leximancer technique which is based on Bayesian theory. The authors explain that one of the advantages of Leximancer over other computerized content analysis software such as WordStat (cf. Pitt et al, 2007) is that it does not require words with low semantic value such as pronouns and conjunctions to be excluded from the analysis since it builds concepts rather than just strictly counting words. Likewise, it does not require stemming, which is typically done in other packages by removing or substituting common suffixes (Pitt et al. 2008).

Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS): Chen et al. (2008) performed a content analysis through CAQDAS to unveil both the projected and the perceived images of a destination (Kaohsiung City, Taiwan). This study developed nodes applied in CAQDAS and captured related contents into the nodes through each article of blog and government websites.

VBPro/Yoshikoder. VBPro programme was used by Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) to form concept clusters based on co-occurrence of selected terms within cases. According to the authors, this programme has been used successfully in other studies to analyse open-ended responses. Today VBPro is out of date and has been substituted by Yoshikoder-0.6.3-preview (08-01-2009). Yoshikoder is a cross-platform multilingual content analysis programme which performs tasks related to content analysis dictionaries and examines keywords in context. However, this programme has the fundamental disadvantage that it only reads ASCII plain text and not html and therefore information of language-rich text is lost.

NVivo 8 (QSR International) is applied to many fields within the social sciences such as tourism. Among other features, this software enables importing, sorting and analysing different format files (audio, video, photos, word, pdf, text) and graphically displaying project information, connections and findings using models and charts. This software has been used by Bosangit and Mena (2009). These authors used the ASEB (Activities, Setting, Experiences and Benefits) framework for content analysis of text aided by computer programmes. In their research “blogs were converted to rich text format and then inputted to NVivo for content analysis”. Aided by NVivo, for each of their categories they added whether they were weaknesses or strengths. Other authors used this software for content analysis and categorization after performing word frequency counts through other software. This is the case of Pan et al. (2007) who used NVivo tools to create category trees to illustrate relationships between different categories. However, NVivo does not work with html files and its nature is mainly qualitative.

CATPAC is a software for text content analysis (CATA software) based on the principle of artificial neural network, it incorporates a perceptual mapping extension tool (ThoughtView) (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). “CATPAC is able to identify the most important words in a text and determine the patterns of similarity based on the way they are used in the text” (Woelfel, 1998). This programme scans the given text and counts word frequencies. “This software produces a frequency table and proximity matrix for the most often used words in the text, based on their co-occurrences in one unit of analysis” (Zuell & Landmann, 2004). This component is a sliding text window chosen by the researcher. This programme can summarize the main ideas within text, without the need for precoding and without linguistic assumptions. The programme’s creators claim to have a fast software that is fully automatic and does not require any previous coding scheme. It produces a frequency table, and then performs the neural network analysis on the top-X most frequently found words. This software has different versions such as CATPAC II (Galileo), which is the latest. CATPAC II (Doerfel & Barnett, 1999) is also used to generate semantic networks from communication content. CATPAC software is one of the most used among researchers analysing text content: Ryan and Cave (2005), Choi et al. (2007), Govers et al. (2007a, 2007b), Koerte (2009).

Ryan and Cave (2005) studied images of Australian cities and combined CATPAC and TextSmart to analyse the data and construct the perceptual maps of the city images. Choi et al. (2007) used CATPAC II to study website content. The authors explained that the files had to be first saved as .doc files and the text data were then merged into five separate files for each sub-category for further content analysis. The text data were content-analysed using CATPAC II, a programme based on artificial neural networks. CATPAC II identified the words frequently used from each sub-category of website and these frequently used key words were coded into quantified data in SPSS for more quantitative measures such as correspondence analysis.

However, the programme presents some disadvantages. "While many researchers use CATPAC, it does require the researcher to initially read through the text and determine which words are keywords and which can be eliminated" (Schmidt, 1999 as cited in Koerte, 2009). Although the programme is able to cluster, "one has difficulties processing files of substantial size with CATPAC" (Woelfel, 1998). CATPAC allows processing just one file at a time. With CATPAC, website information must be transformed into text files and copy-pasted, which is really time-consuming and impractical for large samples of textual files.

Stepchenkova et al. (2009) are aware of the weaknesses in CATA software use. Therefore the authors claim to perform a more effective and transparent methodology for content analysis of tourism electronic textual data by processing text alternatively using two software products (**CATPAC and WORDER**). This approach is applied to destination-image research and "permits smoothing of the original textual data, identification of the variables of interest, frequency count of the occurrences of these variables in the texts being processed, storage of frequency results in general purpose statistical packages, and subsequent dimensional reduction of word-frequency data by means of factor analysis". The authors claim that their process is replicable.

WORDER, the second software used, produces "word counts, frequency rankings, cluster diagrams, and interactive neural cluster analysis. Its add-on function ThoughtView can generate two- and three-dimensional concept maps based on the results of the analyses. WORDER was developed to automate counting of specified words and their variants in a large number of textual files. During one run, WORDER is capable of parsing up to 1,000 textual files looking for up to 1,000 words and counting their occurrences in every data file" (Stepchenkova et al., 2009). "These words (keywords) are specified for counting by means of an input table (or a dictionary) created by the researcher. Through this dictionary WORDER replaces synonym words by the designed keywords. The other input for WORDER is a list of names of all data files that need to be processed. The result of WORDER analysis is a numerical matrix of key-word frequencies, which can be easily transported to general statistical analysis packages like SPSS" (Stepchenkova et al. 2009). Krizman and Belullo (2007) also used WORDER (version 2.1) in combination with HAMLET II (version 2.2.2. for content analysis of data.

However, although the process of Stepchenkova et al. (2009) is very consistent and reliable, the software used does not overcome one fundamental disadvantage: text must be manually copied and pasted into the programme and has a limit of files for processing, which makes the study of large samples of information of travel blog and review entries and OTW

files inconvenient and highly time-consuming. Moreover, by the process of copying and pasting web information into these programmes, the richness of html language (the level of words: in the title, subtitle, photo captions, etc.) is lost. We considered that such richness in an Internet world must not be lost as it is fundamental to assess the relevance of the information. Furthermore, WORDER has the drawback that it can only process 1000 textual files at a time, which is a limited number. Moreover, we think the best way to analyse text is by preserving its original form and content as much as possible. In this respect, the fact that WORDER or other software replace words by synonymous keywords is for us a significant distortion of the content, to be avoided. As previously explained, if synonyms are significant they should all be included in the same keyword group or category.

Site Content Analyzer 3 is a new generation programme especially designed for website analysis. "It parses website on- and offline for keywords, suggests the most relevant and weighty phrases, analyzes link structure" among other tasks. With it, you can identify "the most relevant keywords and keyphrases for each page of your site, learn if the parameters of the site (keyword density, keyword weight, etc.) meet the guidelines of search engines. Site Content Analyzer 3 supports Unicode in full and thus you can analyze websites in any Language" (<http://www.cleverstat.com/en/sca-website-analysis-software-index.htm>).

As Suriya, Nagarajan, Sathish Babu and Kumaresan (2005) explain, this programme is used to extract the words, wordphrases and context-relevant passages representing the contents of the publications by adopting the stemming procedure based on the context-sensitive longest-match principle and a phrase recognition algorithm.

This programme has been used in tourism-related research (but not travel blog analysis). Berridge (2010) uses it to study event pitching. Specifically, the author uses it to analyse responses of participants in the study through content analysis software and to adopt a conceptual analysis approach to establish the consistency and frequency of concepts in terms of weight and count, concepts suggested by Krippendorff (1980).

Other non-tourism related researchers who use this programme are Yadav and Yadav (2011) who have the same software in question as a target of their research and describe its utilities (Site Content Analyzer). For these authors, Site Content Analyser software is an important tool of analysis, most useful to define keyword density and weight of keyphrases, and to analyse web content. Gulati and Sharma (2013) use Site Content Analyzer software to analyse the word importance for image annotation online, they study the keywords related to pictures online through this software to be able to retrieve relevant online images. Suriya et al. (2005) used Site Content Analyzer for text mining, in the case of building maps of specific domains in the discipline "Gender Studies in Informatics (GSI). For the authors, "text mining, also known as document information mining, text data mining, or knowledge discovery in textual database is an apt technology for analysing large domains of unstructured data in order to extract relevant patterns or knowledge". Here, text mining tools such as TexNet32 and Site Content Analyzer were applied on the GSI database to get the relevant words. Wahsheh, Alsmadi and Al-Kabi (2012) used Site Content Analyzer software to evaluate spam in Arabic webpages. They used it to extract a set of content-based features from the collected Arabic web pages for the top 10 most frequently used keywords by Arabic web searchers (frequency, density, weight, etc.).

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of all of the previous software, the most suitable programme for our study was chosen: Site Content Analyzer 3.2.

- Selection of Site Content Analyzer 3.2

This software was chosen for several reasons: it keeps the CATA software advantages for text analysis, but also enables the treatment of html information (no need to “copy-paste” texts) and gives detailed insight into data. This programme is specially designed for website analysis, which gives added value for its use when dealing with virtual tourist image. In this research we were looking for software which enabled us to perform quantitative content analysis of text in the same way as CATA software (keyword counting basically) but that was also designed to deal with website information, and Internet-relevant parameters (site-wide density, links, etc.). We were looking for software specialized in online information, which could retrieve information directly from the URL or the blog entries or webpages. The software used for this research should enable the processing of html information and preserve the richness (levels) of this language. Due to the great amount of blogs and review entries analysed, there should not be the need to transform files into .doc. Moreover, we wanted a programme enabling the treatment of thousands of files at the same time without the necessity to copy and paste all texts. Another aspect we considered was that with new technologies, in few years software advances greatly, and some of the software considered has been surpassed by other software. We wanted an up-to-date programme. Site Content Analyzer, performs the tasks this research needs. It is simple and easy to use, which is not the case of other qualitative-oriented programmes with more applications and more complicated processes of use.

Site Content Analyser 3.2 has the following features and performs the following tasks, among others:

- Unveils the most relevant keywords
- Works not only with single keywords, but also with keyword phrases
- Analyses information directly from websites (both online and offline)
- Analyses keyword density, the weight of the keywords and phrases.
- Works with website links analysis
- Analyses page-wide keywords or site-wide keywords (multiple pages at the same time)
- Exports results and data to CSV files for further keyword research and statistical analysis.
- Creates visual and comprehensible reports with information.
- Works with pages in any language thanks to Unicode support
- Enables checking any keyword phrase for its value if the researcher considers it necessary.

- Other software used

In this research, the Site Content Analyzer programme was used to perform content analysis by keyword counts and analysis, mainly. Site content analyser generates a CSV file for each blog entry conveying all the words appearing in that entry-file, their count, weight and density.

Then, a **utility of Java language to process strings** (constructing a general matrix with all the word counts for each blog entry) was used to export these CSV files (one file per blog entry)

into a general CSV file, with the information for the total entries (see Annex A.3. Ad hoc programmes, PhD.java). This utility parses through the word counts of each entry and counts how many times words within a certain category appear (in each blog entry). For each entry it adds up all the cases appearing for each category. It then places this information in a row, each row representing an entry. Columns are destined to the different categories. This layout enables statistical measurements such as correlations. The creation of this utility was necessary as the words in each category were very numerous and other programmes posed problems to this task.

Finally **IBM SPSS Statistics** was used for several statistical measurements of data (see Annex A.2. Applications, IBM SPSS Statistics). The matrix generated by the Java utility in CSV format was imported to SPSS. SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) “is a computer program used for survey authoring and deployment (IBM SPSS Data Collection), data mining (IBM SPSS Modeler), text analytics, statistical analysis, and collaboration & deployment (batch & automated scoring services)” (Wikipedia). It is a highly recognized and used programme for the statistical treatment of data in social sciences. Among other authors dealing with travel blog information and official tourism website information, SPSS is used by Krizman and Belullo (2007), Choi et al. (2007), Chen et al. (2008).

- Setting up Site Content Analyzer

Site Content Analyzer was considered the most suitable programme to perform the content analysis of travel blog entries in html files (see Annex A.2. Applications, Site Content analyzer). Site Content Analyzer is adaptable to the preferences and needs of its users. We adapted the programme to the necessities of this study as follows:

- Parser preferences:

- **Black list:** As the programme analyses language text, there is usually a significant number of words that are repeated very often but that are usually insignificant. These ‘stop words’ are in fact prepositions, adverbs or pronouns, that could distort the analysis. For instance, these are: "while", "with", "you", "may", "that" and so on. These words do not give any valuable information. Analyzer enables you to easily filter down all necessary keywords using black lists. The programme has a default black list, which contains an exhaustive and accurate list of all these meaningless words in English. Therefore this was the list used to analyse our sample.
- **Word length:** the programme allows you to set the option to ignore too short or too long words. In this case we used the most accepted mode which rejects words of less than three letters, as they are usually particles with no meaning. We did not apply any upper limit for long words not to condition the analysis.
- **White list:** white lists tell Analyzer which keywords must be included into the analysis even if they would otherwise be ignored due to a black list or ignoring option. In this case we did not consider it necessary to use a white list.
- **Composite words:** in Analyzer, every keyword gets its own statistics: count, density, weight and other parameters. However, there are multi-word concepts that should be counted together such as “Sagrada Família” or “Lloret de Mar” for example. The programme enables creating a composite word list so that they can be counted as a single unit or word. In this case we created an extensive list of composite words

(see Annex B.6.) which has been produced by an extensive research process of composite words related to the case study (Catalonia):

- We downloaded all the names of the more than 800 municipalities in Catalonia and added to the list all the place names with more than one word. We did the same with the names of the tourist brands.
- We consulted the PressPack and Catalan Brands documents edited by the Generalitat de Catalunya in order to find heritage composite words, place composite words, activities composite words, etc.
- We added all the composite names of Gaudí's works and all museum names, for example.
- Finally, we added composite words to the list that the researchers considered to be significant in relation to Catalonia. These were, for example, famous places (Plaça Sant Jaume, Estany de Sant Maurici), traditions (bullfighting, la Mercè, etc.), dishes (pa amb tomaca), etc.

- Site Content Analyzer raw statistics:

The Site Content Analyzer programme gives different data outputs in different columns, some of which will be used later on to perform deeper data analysis. It could be said that these are the statistical data or information that is primarily extracted from travel blogs and reviews and official tourism webpages. The programme structures information in a table, where there is a word or composite word in the first column and then different measures are given about this word.

The information we retrieved using Site Content Analyzer is the following:

- **Keywords:** keyword is a single word or composite word in the text of a web page. This is a term search engines operate with. Every word on a page is in fact a keyword, it alters the overall ranking of a page in search engine's index. The way it does so depends on its weight, distribution and density.
- **Keyword count:** this option counts how many times a certain word, or composite word, appears on a given page (website or list of files). It is the absolute word count.
- **Keyword density:** keyword density is a relative value that reflects the frequency of a keyword on a page. Unlike keyword count, which is absolute value, keyword density is relative to the entire number of keywords on a page. This allows comparing keywords on pages with different amount of text on them.
- **Keyword weight:** keyword weight is one of the most important keyword parameters in SEO (Search Engine Optimization). It shows the importance of a keyword to search engines according to the tags with which it is enclosed. For example, if you have a page about cooking, you put the word "cooking" in the title of the page and perhaps mention it somewhere in the headings of your articles. So, a search engine indexing your page will notice "cooking" in the title and headings and assign it a high weight signifying the high likelihood that your page is about cooking. The same happens with tourism-related words.

The information mentioned above can be given for words that appear on a single page, in a single file or in all the files at the same time. Both the File-wide keywords mode and the Site-wide keywords mode were used for different purposes, as we shall see later.

- **File-wide keywords mode:** File-wide keywords mode allows seeing the most frequent keywords of a given page. For each keyword, Analyzer shows the following info: count, keyword density, and also within which tags that keyword is included.
- **Site-wide keywords mode:** unlike file-wide keywords mode, site-wide keywords mode displays all the keywords within a project; that is, all keywords from all files in one list. This mode allows you to estimate the most popular keywords on a website and also to see how they are distributed across the pages of a website.

The programme also gives you more analytical options which, although consulted, have not been used for further analysis.

2.4. Analysis performance

This section explains content analysis performance. This section addresses the travel blog and review entries and official tourism website analysis, performed at different database levels, from the more general analytic measures to the more specific measures.

Data analysis consists of three levels of analysis, each of them based on a different databases and datamatrices. These levels of analysis follow a logical research order process, from the more general and major in size, to first gain a more general view of the studied subject, to the more specific, progressively becoming more detailed and smaller in size. The first two levels of analysis include a database consisting of both official tourism website pages and files and travel blog and review entries. The third level consists only of travel blog and review entries classified by bloggers into certain destinations or brands.

Once the websites for study were chosen, the download of all the files about the destination was undertaken for both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. However, the majority of travel reviews referred to accommodation and dining. This type of entries were removed from the database because they do not serve the purpose of studying the image of a certain destination in a broad sense as they mostly focus on marketing purposes such as booking and advertisements, and would distort destination image results. These reviews are too specific and too focused on the evaluation of certain specific restaurants and hotels. This kind of tourist infrastructure does not usually attract tourism by itself, and does not focus on the factors that attract tourists to the destinations. Besides, these reviews concerning lodging and dining are not similar in content to travel blogs. Moreover, it is in hotel and restaurant reviews that fake reviews are usually found as businesses have an economic interest behind them and may try to boost their online reputation by creating fake entries. Hence, only travel reviews concerning tourist destinations, sites and tourist attraction factors remained.

2.4.1. First level of database analysis

The widest, most general or first level of analysis is based on a database consisting of travel blog and review entries in all languages, excluding entries about hotels and restaurants, and official tourism website web pages and files in English and in multiple language files with English plus other languages. This database was used to obtain preliminary information about the data and to get an overview of the studied subject. Choi et al. (2007) pointed out

as a limitation of travel blog analysis that results are usually found in English (excluding non-English speaking tourists). Therefore, in this general first approach, all blogs in all languages were included as the information extracted does not differ depending on the language.

With the Site Content Analyzer software already set up (see section 2.3.12), on the one hand, the analysis was performed of the data gathered for all travel blog entries at the same time and, on the other, for all the official tourism website pages and files at the same time. To do so, the Site Content Analyser programme used the site-wide keyword mode. The programme generates a list of all unique words and their frequency, site-wide density and average weight. Two lists were obtained, one for official tourism websites and the other for travel blogs and reviews.

The resulting table has the following structure (table 2.10):

Table 2.10

First level database table form

OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES				TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS			
Word	Count	Site-Wide Density	Average Weight	Word	Count	Site-Wide Density	Average Weight
...

Through this analysis we obtained **Preliminary information**: this analysis was the first performed, the most general, to get an overview of the studied subject. It consisted of analysing the total sample of valid travel blogs and reviews (in all languages) and official tourism website web pages and files (in English and mixed English plus other languages) with the Site Content Analyzer programme to obtain several data such as word counts. From this preliminary information we obtained results about the most frequent words and performed a preliminary study of outstanding elements.

- Most frequent words

From the obtained data, an initial table (see Table 3.18) containing the 50 first meaningful or relevant words of the list was produced, with all the information mentioned before: count, site-wide density and average weight. This first part of the analysis was inspired by the work of Krizman and Belullo (2007) who studied statistically the top 50 most frequent words (combined) for Istria's image analysis, and in Choi et al. (2007) who displayed and compared the top 20 most frequently used words for each website sub-category and showed the combined total frequencies for all categories of websites.

This first table serves to get a general idea of the most mentioned meaningful keywords, to what they are related. Are they cities? Are they feelings? Are they heritage sites?, etc. It is the first sight of what tourists who have visited Catalonia mention. It is also a very good way to see if single sights, names, places, etc. stand out from the rest (regardless of whether they will be classified into categories at a later stage).

- Specific preliminary study of outstanding elements:

The first 50 words obtained usually show some outstanding elements of which we can make a preliminary study and compare them among official tourism websites and travel blogs and

reviews thus showing the greatest differences between both types of websites. An exploratory table was drawn up conveying the same parameters (count, site-wide density, and average weight) with the subject of Gaudí and his masterpieces (see table 3.19) in both travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites in our case, due to the observed extraordinary presence of these elements in travel blogs and reviews.

2.4.2. Second level of database analysis

This second section already worked with categories and was drawn up with a smaller sample in which only travel blogs and reviews written in English and official tourism website files exclusively in English remained. This second level database was used to obtain data classified according to the different categories, each composed of several keywords. The travel blogs and reviews not written in English, as well as the official tourism website pages and files not exclusively written in English, were excluded from this point on to avoid language confusions and to focus on files only written in English because the keyword-based categorization of analysis is language-dependent. Although, selecting the official tourism website pages and files only in English was an uncomplicated task, in the case of travel blogs and reviews a more complex process had to be undertaken (see 2.4.2.1).

At this stage, three types of information were extracted for each of the groups of categories for both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews: data with reference to the total database, data file-per-file, and descriptive statistics per file.

2.4.2.1. Selecting travel blogs and reviews only in English

Although the websites' main Language is English, we saw that some of the entries were written in different languages. In this sense, and to overcome the language limitation pointed out by Choi et al. (2007), in the previous section we first performed a general analysis which was not language dependent with all entries (in all languages), and afterwards we selected only the entries in English for content analysis and categorization. These entries in other languages had to be eliminated at this second stage of analysis in order not to distort the content analysis of the text by the means of word categorization, which is highly language-dependent.

To detect the language of the different files, we used the **Language Detection** programme. This programme is based on the Naive Bayes text classification algorithm. It is based on separating corpuses of text into 1, 2 or 3 letters and counting the frequencies and weights of these groups of letters, and, depending on their frequencies, it is possible to say that this text is written in this or that Language. It has dictionaries of several languages. In this case, all European languages have been used, including Catalan. Only English-written blogs remained. All files were checked with this programme.

To check the Language of the texts, the html files are transformed into text files. This is not a compulsory step, as the programme rejects html codes, but for greater security text files only show what the users write and see, nothing else.

2.4.2.2. Words groups (total databases)

After leaving only entries and files in the English language, we proceeded to obtain data organized according to pre-established categories or word groups. The main objective of this

step was to obtain the total word counts for each word group or category both for the total database of travel blog and review entries and of official tourism website files and pages and other relevant information (site-wide density and average weight) concerning it.

To achieve this word grouping into the categories we used two files: the list of words (and information about them) contained in the .csv file generated by the Site-wide Keyword Mode using Site Content Analyzer 3.2 and the .csv file with the groups of words (or all the words within each category).

Then, with these two files, a string processing programme (see Annex A.3. ExportSCAproject.java) generated a new file with the frequencies, site-wide density and average weight for each group of words (or category). A file with the structure shown in table 2.11 was generated for each of the main groups of smaller categories (tourist brands, attraction factors, feelings and opposites, and cultural identity) separately for the official tourism website database and the travel blog and reviews database.

Table 2.11
Word groups or categories matrix shape with reference to the total databases

Group or category	Count	Site-Wide Density	Average Weight
Word_a1
Word_a2
Word_a3
Word_a4
GROUP A
Word_b1
Word_b2
GROUP B

For example, in the case of tourist brands we gathered the name of the brand and all the municipalities and destinations within it into the same group to see how often this brand or destinations within it were mentioned.

The information which is drawn from this matrix was extracted **with reference to the total targeted database**, either that of official tourism websites or, separately, that of travel blogs and reviews. We obtained:

- The total **word count** for that category, or the total number of times words within this category appear in the whole database.
- The **Site-wide density** of the category: this parameter measures the density of a category within the total database targeted. It represents how many words out of 1,000 correspond to the category in the database. It is expressed as a %, which is a fundamental relative measure that enables comparing results obtained from official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews.
- Average **Weight**: this shows the importance of a group of words or category to search engines according to the tags within which it is enclosed. This measure is relevant for online information as the Internet and especially search engines base their searches upon the hierarchy of HTML tags on which the weight measure is based. If, for example, the words of

a certain category usually appear in the most prominent parts of the file, for example in the title, their weight will be greater.

2.4.2.3. Matrix with content categorization (file-per-file)

After producing the first word groups, there was a need to organize the information differently, by gathering it into the different categories entry-per-entry or file-per-file, of both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews, to conduct more complex analyses and statistical measures, and to establish relationships between categories which can only be established if the information is gathered file-per-file.

It was found that the best option to build a treatable array by programmes such as excel or SPSS, was to place on the Y-axis each of the travel blog entries or official tourism website files one after the other (as if each T-blog entry was an individual), and to place all the categories (composed of keywords) on the X-axis. The information in the matrix is the total word count of each category per file.

Hence, the matrix we built used 2 parameters. The Y-axis for the Travel blog (T-blog) entries and the X-axis for the different categories (see Table 2.12). The same process was undertaken for official tourism websites. Each web page or file was placed as an individual on the Y-axis and the different categories on the X- or horizontal axis.

Table 2.12
 Word groups or categories matrix shape per file

	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3	CATEGORY 4
T-BLOG 1	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
T-BLOG 2	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
T-BLOG 3	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
T-BLOG 4	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
...

To construct this array first we had to analyse each travel blog and review entry and official tourism website files with the Site Content Analyzer programme and export the extracted data to a .csv file. The programme enables the exportation of the frequency, site-wide density and weight to a .csv file, one by one. In the case of large numbers of files, macro software could be used to automatize operations, as indeed we did for this research.

Then, through a string processing programme, the array with the categories and the different entries or web pages and files was built (see Annex A.3. Ad hoc programmes: PhD.java). To do so, the programme receives two inputs: on the one hand the file with the list of words within each category, and on the other, the .csv files extracted for each file: for the travel blog and review entries and for official tourism website pages and files, which contained the word frequencies.

Once the information was labelled in such an array, further statistical analysis could be done. The basis of such labelling of information was that it enabled seeing not only the total word counts of the categories but also what words, and categories, were mentioned in the same blog entries. That is to say, what things were mentioned together by the same blogger or reviewer in the same entry (one entry is one unit). Therefore they could be correlated and statistically treated.

This scope is similar to that of Andsager and Drzewiecka (2002) but is one step further in conceptualization. These authors studied the written representations of destinations by college students based on guidebook materials. They used CATA software that identified co-occurrences of key words within the cases, and these key words were analysed to determine relationships between the most frequent words used to describe destinations. In our study, co-occurrences and relationships will also be sought for the same cases (entries) but for categories, not just words, and the information obtained for travel blogs and reviews will be compared to that of official tourism websites.

From the matrix with content categorization file-per-file different data were obtained:

- Descriptive statistics per file

This array was introduced to the SPSS file and different statistical data were obtained for the different categories within each of the four groups of categories (brands, attraction factors, feelings and opposites, and cultural identity), per file:

- Sum (Word count): see 2.4.2.2 (this measure is repeated to better read the other measures of the table).

- Mean: shows the average number of times that a certain category appears per file.

- Standard Deviation: the standard deviation of categories is useful to see whether the mention of these categories is more or less uniformly spread among files. A very high standard deviation would mean that this category is concentrated only in certain files and not uniformly mentioned.

- Variance: the variance derives from the standard deviation and shows such concentration or uniform mention of categories more acutely.

This information was obtained through the option Analyze → Descriptive Statistics → Descriptives

- Pearson correlation

This is a bivariate measure which relates the different targeted categories to one another. This measure was performed using SPSS with the option Analyze → Correlate → Bivariate Correlations. Here, we chose the Pearson correlation option, the Two-tailed Test of Significance option and that the programme would Flag the significant correlations. This produced arrays with R= the correlation and 2-tailed significance to 0.05 and 0.01. Only correlations with a 2-tailed significance of less than 0.01 were considered significant.

First, we calculated the correlations between the categories within each of the four groups of categories, to see for example, which attraction factors were correlated to one another. Second, we correlated the different brand categories within the brand category group to all of the other categories in the other three category groups to see to what elements (categories) each brand territory is associated.

- Cluster analysis

A cluster analysis was performed for each of the brands; first, with official tourism websites and then, with travel blogs and reviews. Cluster analysis was performed using the option Analyze → Classify → Tree → “decision trees” in SPSS.

In our case, we placed each of the brands as dependent values (one-by-one) and the rest of categories as independent (predictor) variables. Therefore, we searched for the variables on which the brand categories depended, the independent variables that explain and determine the presence of the brands.

According to SPSS, “**Decision Trees** creates a tree-based classification model. It classifies cases into groups or predicts values of a dependent (target) variable based on values of independent (predictor) variables. The procedure provides validation tools for exploratory and confirmatory classification analysis”.

We chose the CHAID growing model. **CHAID** (Chi-squared Automatic Interaction Detection), at each step chooses the independent (predictor) variable that has the strongest interaction with the dependent variable. Categories of each predictor are merged if they are not significantly different with respect to the dependent variable. When using CHAID we must take into account the:

- **Maximum Tree Depth**, which Controls the maximum number of levels of growth beneath the root node. The Automatic setting limits the tree to three levels beneath the root node for the CHAID and Exhaustive CHAID methods, and five levels for the CRT and QUEST methods.

- **Minimum Number of Cases**, which controls the minimum numbers of cases per node. Nodes that do not satisfy these criteria will not be split. Increasing the minimum values tends to produce trees with fewer nodes. Decreasing the minimum values produces trees with more nodes.

In this case we performed CHAID analysis for both a 3-depth level and a 5-depth level to gain more insight into the explanatory variables. Due to data characteristics and to avoid the presence of strange elements we established as the Minimum Cases in Parent Node (150) and the Minimum Cases in child node (100) (see section 3.2.1.5.2).

2.4.2.4. Zoom into a certain subject through “regular language”

Once at this point it is interesting to zoom into certain relevant subjects by searching phrases where this subject appears along with other words which have a certain content or significance. To look for phrases which speak about a certain element among the files we used the ‘Actual Search & Replace’ programme (see Annex A.1. Utilities: Actual Search & Replace) which allows the search of groups of words with various endings and order, by using regular expressions (other similar programmes enable the same functions). The search of the sentences can be “Case Sensitive” and can be restrained to one same paragraph.

Regular expressions are used for advanced searches, where the search string follows a rule and is not always exactly the same. They employ “special character operators” which are symbols that control the search, and “an expression”, which is a combination of meta characters and operators that specify a pattern.

In this case, a zoom into the comments about Catalan language held by bloggers and reviewers was made. The two aspects analysed were:

- Positive/negative perception of the interest subject in the same phrase, and
- Relationship with other similar subjects of interest in the same phrase.

2.4.3. Third level of database analysis

At this level, only the entries or files which are geographically classified into the different tourist brands were targeted as the objective of this section is to spatially locate attraction factors, identity elements, and feelings and dichotomies in detail and to unveil spatial specialization, diversification and location of attraction factors.

2.4.3.1. User-generated image per brands

With the purpose of analysing user-generated images of Catalonia from a spatial point of view only the blog and review entries purposely classified as belonging to specific destinations were selected. Then they were labelled in separate folders according to the brand region to which they belonged. The majority of travel blog and review entries were classified by their creators into a certain brand or destination enabling a distinctive analysis for different territories. However, in the case of official tourism websites, the geographical brand to which they refer is very difficult to determine as many of them refer to multiple territories at the same time or to the whole of Catalonia. Hence, from this point onwards, only the travel blog and review entries classified by bloggers were used for analysis. This deepening into travel blog and review content is very interesting to specifically see the tourists’ image or the user-generated image of the different destinations and for the relationship of tourist image and tourist space.

This time, the database used for this analysis is only composed of travel blog and review entries purposely classified by users into some destination, and therefore the database of blogs and reviews is smaller in size than the previous one of the second level. Entries which were unclassified or general of all the Catalan territory were excluded from the sample.

In this case, the information we used to build several tables for each category and for each brand was Site-wide density. On the X-axis we placed each of the brand names and on the Y-axis, the different categories and subcategories.

We obtained tables with the structure shown in Table 2.13. We obtained these tables with the site-wide density of the categories and subcategories for each of the three category groups: attraction factors, feelings and opposites, and cultural identity, and compared the categories and subcategories within each of them.

In the case of attraction factors, it was found interesting to build up an indexed card for each of the brands which conveyed the information about attraction factor categories in percentages (see 3.2.2.1). That is, from the total elements counted for each brand, the percentage belonging to each category. And, also, what percentage each of the

subcategories account for from the total category. Moreover, the most frequent words for each of the categories and subcategories were reflected to be able to see what specific elements were most mentioned for each of them.

Table 2.13

Site-Wide density matrix shape of categories per territories according to travel blogs and reviews

Group of categories	Territory1	Territory 2	Territory 3	Territory 4	...
Category 1	SW Density %
Subcategory 1a
Subcategory 1b
Category 2
Subcategory 2a
Subcategory 2b
Subcategory 2c
...

2.4.3.2. Spatial indexes

The information in absolute numbers (percentages and site-wide density of each category relative to a specific brand), especially with regard to attraction factors, may be considered insufficient as it does not reflect the brands' specialization, the location or concentration of certain elements, its diversification, etc. in certain regions relative to the rest of the regions and to the whole territory studied.

In this respect, spatial indicators are statistical analysis measures that allow extracting thesis and conclusions about economic specialization for each territorial unit at two levels. These measures serve to see where a certain sector or activity is located among certain territories, how much this activity is concentrated or regularly spread, how much a territory or region is specialized in specific activities, or how diversified they are in one territorial unit. In our case, the regions will be the different brand territories and the sectors of activity the different attraction factors. In our case, two brands (Terres de L'Ebre and Terres de Lleida) were excluded from spatial indexes due to the low number of travel blog and review entries for these brands.

We calculated four coefficients per brand, as shown in table 2.14:

Table 2.14

Formulas used to calculate the spatial indexes

Location quotient:	$LQ_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij}}{x_{.j}} \bigg/ \frac{x_{i.}}{x_{..}}$	Localization coefficient:	$LC_i = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^h \left \frac{x_{ij}}{x_{i.}} - \frac{x_{.j}}{x_{..}} \right $
Specialization coefficient:	$SC_j = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n \left \frac{x_{ij}}{x_{.j}} - \frac{x_{i.}}{x_{..}} \right $	Diversification coefficient:	$DC_j = 1 - \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^n x_{ij})^2}{n \sum_{i=1}^n x_{ij}^2}$
n: Number of sectors		h: Number of regions	
$x_{i.}$: Total value in sector i		$x_{.j}$: Total value in region j	
x_{ij} : Value in sector i in region j		$x_{..}$: Total value (in all sectors and regions)	

Source: Perez, R. (2010). *Nociones básicas de Estadística*. Universidad de Oviedo

• **Location quotient (LQ):** The location quotient is an index $[0..∞]$ for comparing a region's share of a particular activity with the share of that same activity found on a larger spatial level.

- $LQ_{ij} < 1$, means that sector i in region j is not very significant, or lower than that found in the base region
- $LQ_{ij} = 1$, in this case, the relative importance of sector i in region j , mirrors its importance in the base region
- $LQ_{ij} > 1$, means that activity i in region j plays an important role, and that indicates a relative concentration of sector i in region j compared to the base region

• **Localization coefficient (LC):** The sectorial localization coefficient $[0..1]$ informs whether one sector i is more or less concentrated in some regions.

- $LC_i = 1$, means that sector i is highly concentrated in a few regions
- $LC_i = 0$, means that sector i has an equilibrated distribution

• **Specialization coefficient (SC):** The regional specialization coefficient $[0..1]$ allows characterizing the region's activities in terms of its higher or lower specialization compared to the base region's activities.

- $SC_j = 0$, region j is not specialized in any activity, and all sector shares equal the base region average
- $SC_j = 1$, the closer to 1 the ratio is, the more specialized region j is

• **Diversification coefficient (DC):** The diversification coefficient $[0..1]$ measures the activities diversification degree in region j .

- $DC_j = 0$, means that region j has a the highest degree of diversification, the activities are distributed evenly among the n branches of activity considered
- $DC_j = 1$, means that region j has a heavily concentrated sectorial pattern, with the entire activity of the region in a single sector.

3. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The empirical research chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section (3.1) deals with the database itself, it presents it in its different aspects and explains what the specific data sources used in this study are, how data were collected and downloaded, and the outcomes of the process of data mining, data arrangement, data cleaning and data dissemination. This first section is very important to understand the data themselves and shows and explains the outcomes of the methodological process about the database. All the database outcomes presented followed a logical and chronological order of research, also reflected in the methodology chapter.

The second section (3.2), which deals with the results themselves, is divided into two sections: Section 3.2.1, which explains compared results of the projected and the perceived-transmitted images (official tourism website image vs. travel blog and review image). These results are obtained from the first and second database levels, the wider, which have Catalonia as a geographical scope, except for point 3.2.1.5 in which correlations and cluster analysis are conducted for variables and brand territories on both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. Section 3.2.2 specifically looks deeper into the perceived-transmitted image through the study of geographically classified travel blogs and reviews and corresponds to the third level of database. In this case, the level of analysis is more specific and results are classified on a smaller geographical basis: the Catalan tourist brands. It should be stressed that this section is organized in a logical order which consists of three major levels of data analysis, from a more general level to a more specific level. These levels of analysis are determined by the size of the database used. Therefore three different databases were used, from the first, being wider, to the last, being more constrained.

3.1. Database

This first section presents the database used in this research and the different outcomes concerning data drawn from the methodological process previously explained. Different data are presented concerning: data sources, data collection and download, data arrangement, data cleaning, data mining, and data dissemination.

3.1.1. Data sources

This section is divided into the official tourism websites that, in principle, project the destination image, and websites hosting travel blogs and reviews which contain the tourists' perceived and transmitted image.

3.1.1.1. Official tourism websites

After following the selection method process, we gathered a purposive sample of official tourism websites about Catalonia. As previously explained, the official image of Catalonia was targeted at state, regional and sub-regional or sectorial level. Thus, the information relative to Catalonia was obtained from the Spanish Tourism Corporate Website (Spain.info), plus the information located in the tourism websites of the autonomous government of Catalonia (GenCat.Cat) and the information on the nine sectorial brand websites. The

Catalan Tourism Agency adopted nine tourism brands that divided Catalonia into nine tourist regions (see Figure 2.1 and Table 3.1).

Table 3.1
Tourist regions of Catalonia at 2012-01-01

Pyrenees	Val d'Aran	Terres de Lleida	Catalunya Central	Costa Brava
				
Costa Barcelona	Barcelona	Costa Daurada	Terres de l'Ebre	Whole Catalonia
				

Source: *Tourism of Catalonia* (http://www.gencat.cat/turistex_nou/home_ang.htm)

3.1.1.2. Travel blogs and reviews

- Selection of travel blog and review websites (application)

We applied the search method process to the case of Catalonia. Considering the selection criterion: *The presence of blogs or reviews about Catalonia or destinations within it should be significant (more than 100 entries in the same website)*, in the end, no travel blog websites in French were found which met the selection criteria. Therefore, the whole sample of websites had English (American or British) as the main language.

The excluded travel blog and review hosting websites not fulfilling the previous criterion (both English and French websites) were:

English: blogs.StaTravel.com, CosmoTourist.com, HolidayCheck.com, IgoUgo.com/travel_blog, TravelBlog.com, TravelJournals.net/stories

French: blog.eBookers.ch/fr, blogs-de-voyage.fr, en-escale.com, top-depart.com/blog, TourismeVoyage.com, TravelBlog.fr, Uniterre.com/blog.

The travel blog and review hosting websites to be located in which entries for Catalonia had a significant presence were initially:

GetJealous.com, MyTripJournal.com, RealTravel.com, TravBuddy.com, TravelBlog.org, TravellersPoint.com, TravelPod.com, TravelPost.com, VirtualTourist.com and TripAdvisor.com

Afterwards, we detected that TravelPost.com had been absorbed by DealBase.com and hence stopped hosting travel blogs. Thus, this travel blog website was removed from the sample of websites. TripAdvisor.com, which has experienced spectacular growth in entries about Catalonia in recent years, manages and operates websites under eighteen other travel media brands, including TravelPod.com and VirtualTourist.com, was then included into the sample.

General domain information was gathered for these websites (IP, registrant city, date of creation and language). The registrant city of the site is interesting as it might be related to

the members' country of origin; we observed that all of the registrant cities belong to English speaking states (Australia, USA, UK and Canada), except for TravellersPoint.com, which is registered in Norway. The column "created on" includes the date of the website's registration. It was found that most of the websites were created in the last decade. Although the first website was created in 1995, two-thirds of the websites were created after 2002. All of the websites have English as their main language, and most of them are written in American English.

Table 3.2

Domain information on the nine websites under study

Domain	Internet Protocol	Registrant City	Created on	Language
GetJealous.com (GJ)	74.54.132.194	Bondi (Australia)	2003-03-11	Br. English
MyTripJournal.com (MT)	64.69.83.206	Vancouver (Canada)	2002-05-23	Am. English
RealTravel.com (RT)	64.13.137.38	Drums (Pennsylvania)	1997-03-08	Am. English
TravBuddy.com (TY)	72.52.166.182	Berkeley (California)	2005-07-02	Am. English
TravelBlog.org (TB)	173.193.202.105	Hempstead Holt (England)	2002-03-13	Br. English
TravellersPoint.com (TS)	208.74.9.252	Oslo (Norway)	2002-05-28	Br. English
TravelPod.com (TP)	69.25.35.51	Yarmouth (Canada)	1998-03-05	Am. English
TripAdvisor.com (TA)	69.25.35.31	Bellevue (Washington)	1999-03-23	Am. English
VirtualTourist.com (VT)	64.14.197.3	Bellevue (Washington)	1995-08-03	Am. English

Source: WHOIS (protocol used for querying databases that store the registered users of an Internet resource)

3.1.2. Data collection and download

After the general analysis of both the official tourism websites and the websites hosting travel blogs and reviews, we proceeded to download the data that would be analysed concerning Catalonia through offline browsers.

The webpages of interest were downloaded with the following offline browser:

- Offline Explorer Enterprise

http://www.metaproducts.com/mp/offline_explorer_enterprise.htm

This offline browser downloads web sites to your hard disk and quickly browses them at any time. This enabled us to freeze the permanently changing web (snapshot) for data analysis. In this research, mainly Offline Explorer was used because it works faster.

Due to the volume and weight of images and other multimedia contents present on the travel blog and review hosting websites and on the official tourism websites studied, only text files were downloaded using the option "Online Link Translation": restricted links point to their original online documents and files. Hence, the text to be processed was available and we could also have access to the rest of the information with an online connection if needed.

3.1.2.1. Official tourism websites

In the case of official tourism websites files were classified by regions or tourist brands. We observed that the brand for which most documents were gathered is CostaBrava.org followed by Spain.info, and the one with the least documents is VisitPirineus.com from Pyrenees brand.

Table 3.3

HTML pages and PDF documents gathered in the official tourism websites at 2012-01-01

Domain (particular acronym)	Brand (particular acronym)	HTML en	PDF en	PDF en + other
BarcelonaTurisme.com (BT)	Barcelona (Barna)	258	12	3
CostaBrava.org (CB)	Costa Brava (cBrav)	1,012	8	-
CostaDaurada.info (CD)	Costa Daurada (cDaur)	51	6	7
GenCat.cat (GC)	Catalonia (unClass)	10	21	-
GenCat.cat/turistex_nou (GC)	Catalonia (unClass)	48	29	1
LleidaTur.com (LT)	Terres de Lleida (tLlei)	173	12	2
Spain.info (SP)	Catalonia (unClass)	981	5	-
TerresDelEbre.org (TE)	Terres de l'Ebre (tEbre)	82	7	1
TurismeDeCatalunya.com (TC)	Catalonia (unClass)	250	1	-
TurismePropBarcelona.cat (PB)	Costa Barcelona (cBarc) Catalunya Central (CatCe)	55	-	27
VisitPirineus.com (VP)	Pirineus (Pyren)	28	2	-
VisitValdAran.com (VV)	Val d'Aran (vAran)	73	-	6

Database: 3,021 HTML pages and 150 PDF documents.

en= English

In some cases, the main problem for the download happens to be the download of contents only in English, because the server detects the language configuration of the local PC (which is not English). Thus, a language parameter must be added to the link to be able to download files in English. For example:

www.turismedecatalunya.com/cultura/index.asp?idioma=A

3.1.2.2. Travel blogs and reviews

We downloaded all travel blog entries from the selected travel blog and review hosting websites about Catalonia, from the first ones created to the last one at 31st December 2011. So, the selected travel blogs and reviews for study were all those present on these websites since the first entry about Catalonia was created. Website download was filtered and only travel blog entries classified as Catalonia, Barcelona or unclassified entries mentioning Catalonia or destinations in Catalonia were downloaded.

Some of the travel blog and review websites had a hierarchical site structure. In this case the download was the easiest and occurred when all files were a directory and its subdirectories, for example, <http://www.travelblog.org/Europe/Spain/Catalonia/>.

Some other websites only had the option of site search as navigation. This was the case, for example, of GetJealous.com and TravellersPoint.com in which the information was classified only by country (in this case Spain) and did not reach smaller levels (Catalonia, Barcelona, etc.), and so a Content filter had to be used. This Content filter used some key words that enabled the download of blogs related only to Catalonia. These keywords, not to slow down the download process too much, consisted of the names of the locations (municipalities) with more than 5,000 hotel beds or more than 10,000 camping places (see table 2.2), to which other relevant words were added: that of the region (Catalonia/Catalunya), the names of the cities with secondary airports (Lleida, Girona and Reus), the only province capital missing (Tarragona), and three more keywords (Figueres, Sitges and Montserrat), as it was observed that these locations had their own subdirectory on the websites where

information was classified by destinations. In a similar case of study, Carson (2008) identified fifteen different destinations of analysis within the Northern Territory of Australia, although using a different method.

For example, a complex web to download files for Catalonia was that of Travellerspoint.com which classified blogs by country. First of all, the folder with "Spain" entries was downloaded with the Content filter mentioned before:

(<http://www.travellerspoint.com/blogs/Spain/{:1..1301|25}/>). However, it was observed that despite the filter, within the downloaded files there were pages with trips to places other than Catalonia. The problem was found to lie within a section called "Latest entries". If someone wrote an entry entitled, for example, "Our final days in Barcelona", and later on this person continued travelling to other parts of Spain, the download programme gathered up to five entries of destinations outside Catalonia. In this case the solution was to select and eliminate the mentioned section ("latest entries") from the downloaded website and filter again the content of the entries offline.

Actual Search & Replace programme. Find by means of Regular Expression

- Case sensitive: Off (match capital letter and lower case)
- "." Matches line separators too: On (multiline)
- <div id="latestentries">.*?</div>

In the case of a PHP server, the parameters corresponding to the region or to each town must be identified, as for example:

getjealous.com/blog.php?action=search&term=Sitges&table=diary&docIndex=21

Table 3.4

Travel blog and review entries about Catalonia at 2012-01-01

Domain	Barcelona	Other towns	Unclassified	Empty	First blog
GetJealous.com (GJ)	0	0	1,164	* 371	2001-08-27
MyTripJournal.com (MT)	536	72	0	-	2001-07-25
RealTravel.com (RT)	409	69	0	-	1984-07-31
TravBuddy.com (TY)	832	60	0	** 11	1985-05-20
TravelBlog.org (TB)	2,348	280	106	-	1997-03-07
TravellersPoint.com (TS)	0	0	596	-	1986-05-09
TravelPod.com (TP)	998	481	0	-	1984-12-27
TripAdvisor.com (TA)	67,882	34,519	43	*** 112,698	2002-10-17
VirtualTourist.com (VT)	10,289	2,192	285	*** 515	1999-12-08

Database: 236,756 – 113,595 = 123,161 entries in several languages

*: "This site has now expired ..."; **: "Sorry, X has not created any entries ..."; ***: The writing body is empty

Table 3.4 shows the collected and downloaded sample of travel blog and review entries.

Choi et al. (2007) pointed out the issue of sample representativeness, and said that despite their exhaustive search, their findings might still not be representative of all the English-language websites related to their destination of study (Macau). This concern is valid for the present research.

It can be said that this study gathered the existing travel blog and review entries located in English speaking travel blog hosting websites where blogs about Catalonia were significantly present (more than 100 entries for this territory). In this sense we think that the blog and review entries we collected about Catalonia are probably representative of the whole range

of travel blogs about Catalonia located on English-language specialized websites, as we gathered the majority of them. No other published work known to the author has analysed such a vast sample of travel blogs and reviews, nor any sample that gathered so many travel blogs and reviews located in specialized websites about a certain destination. Hence, this aspect is an added value of our sample of travel blogs and reviews about Catalonia. However, although the majority of travel blogs about Catalonia may have been gathered, the results of this research cannot be generalized as, “to be able to generalize the results in quantitative content analysis, the selection of textual units should be representative of the textual population as a whole” (Stepchenkova et al. 2009), and we did not gather blogs outside specialized websites. However, the sample gathers most of the English speaking travel blog websites where blogs about Catalonia are significantly present.

3.1.3. Data arrangement

In our case, only travel blog and review entries lent themselves to data arrangement according to different parameters.

3.1.3.1. Per ending or subject

TripAdvisor.com and Virtualtourist.com classify their blog entries and reviews into different categories. Their classifications are very interesting to get information about specific subjects (such as local customs) and to help build the categories of the research. We classified the entries of these two websites into specific subjects, attractions or activities. This ending classification is shown in tables 3.5 and 3.6.

In the case of TripAdvisor.com, the reviews about Hotels (76,924) and Restaurants (19,133) were eliminated because of their heavy weight and specialization, which would distort the general results. We did not consider “hotels” and “restaurants” as specific interest subjects for this research as they consist mostly of pure reviews and do not have a “blog” format. Apart from that, we observed that the categories in which most review entries were classified were “Boat/Bus/Trail/walking tours”, “religious sites, churches/cathedrals” and “parks, gardens and fountains”.

Table 3.5

Travel reviews classified per some brands and TripAdvisor.com tags*

Category **	Barna	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	CatCe	Pyren	Other
Amusement, Theme/Water Parks	65	2	21	327	0	0	0
Architectural Buildings, Monuments	571	0	5	1	0	1	0
Museums, Zoos, Aquariums	559	0	93	2	0	0	0
Neighbourhoods, Walking Areas	605	5	8	1	0	0	0
Nightlife, Theatre, Club, Bar, Disco	417	0	0	541	0	0	0
Other, Unclassified	296	34	108	43	5	6	9
Parks, Gardens, Fountains	816	0	11	0	0	0	0
Religious Sites, Churches/Cathedrals	1,040	0	20	0	80	0	8
Shopping, Malls, Flea/Street Markets	247	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sports & Outdoors, Stadiums	247	0	9	6	0	0	0
Boat/Bus/Trail/Walking Tours	2,258	21	63	113	0	7	15
Hotels	46,855	7,675	9,603	10,580	440	584	220
Restaurants	14,163	1,129	1,439	844	80	93	52

Database: 102,444 reviews in several languages

*: Pyren includes Pyrenees and Val d’Aran; Other includes Unclassified and Terres de l’Ebre and Lleida

**: Some attractions may be classified into various categories

In the case of VirtualTourist.com, the subjects which contained the most reviews were “things to do”, “restaurants” and “travel page”. Restaurant reviews were also eliminated in this case as they were not a subject of interest of this research. In this case, “things to do” is the category with the most blog entries.

Table 3.6

Travel blog entries classified per some brands and VirtualTourist.com tags*

Tag	Barna	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	CatCe	Pyren	Other
Travel page	813	34	116	60	29	10	25
Travelogue	494	11	69	19	12	2	18
Review: Favorites	770	14	63	35	12	7	21
Review: Things To Do	3,149	65	395	178	86	34	101
Review: Nightlife	513	11	39	31	0	0	2
Review: Off the Beaten Path	520	6	43	42	11	2	29
Review: Tourist Traps	217	0	12	11	0	0	2
Review: Warnings or Dangers	377	3	25	15	4	2	4
Review: Transportation	624	22	85	33	32	1	10
Review: Local Customs	401	12	34	18	5	1	28
Review: What to Pack	83	2	7	4	2	0	3
Review: Shopping	305	4	22	7	7	0	3
Review: Sports & Outdoors	111	1	9	12	3	0	12
Review: Hotels	781	30	73	50	4	6	23
Review: Restaurants	1,144	18	95	42	12	3	19

Database: 12,766 blog entries in several languages

*: Pyren includes Pyrenees and Val d’Aran; Other includes Unclassified and Terres de l’Ebre and Lleida

3.1.3.2. Per years

We classified the travel blog and review entries per year of creation. Generally, the most remarkable tendencies we observed (see Table 3.7) are the fall of RealTravel’s entries and the strong growth of TripAdvisor’s reviews. All entries before 2002 were grouped into one single column. Although entries clearly grew in the case of TripAdvisor (TA), this tendency is not equal for all websites hosting travel blogs and reviews as many of them have fluctuated over the years and, moreover, entries about Catalonia declined in some of them such as RealTravel.com (RT), TravBuddy.com (TY) and TravelPod.org (TP).

Table 3.7

Travel blog entries classified per years

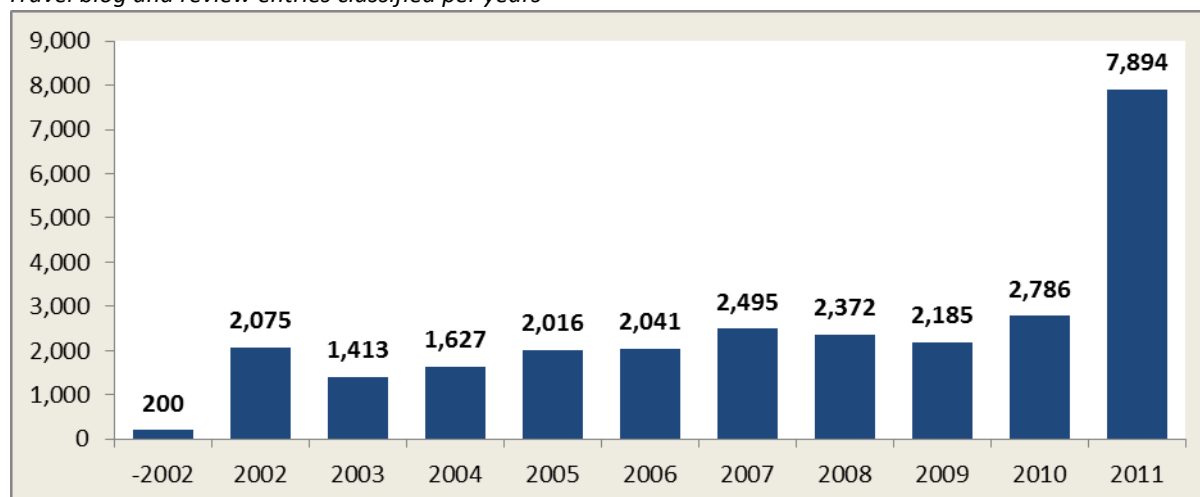
Web	- 2002	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
GJ	1	0	2	28	74	199	245	141	111	87	276
MT	1	0	0	31	95	66	54	40	116	85	120
RT	53	14	11	20	36	104	144	55	29	12	0
TY	26	4	6	27	58	103	204	176	153	88	47
TB	5	3	6	23	147	269	440	687	442	330	382
TS	2	1	3	8	28	16	80	87	112	106	153
TP	33	13	19	29	110	226	258	231	191	199	170
TA	0	2	18	38	38	81	114	201	611	1,468	6,116
VT	79	2,038	1,348	1,423	1,430	977	956	754	420	411	630

Database: 27,104 blog entries in several languages

By contrast, Figure 3.1 shows a general increase of travel blogs and reviews about Catalonia, especially in 2011.

The general tendency of travel blogs and reviews about Catalonia is to grow, but for some years this growth stagnated or even declined, probably due to multiple factors such as the economic crisis. The great number of entries in 2011 was mainly due to the strong growth of the number of TripAdvisor reviews.

Figure 3.1
 Travel blog and review entries classified per years



Database: See Table 3.7

3.1.3.3. Per months

The information was also classified per months. Both table 3.8 and figure 3.2 show a clear seasonality of blog and review writing about Catalonia which more or less corresponds to the most touristy periods (we should remember that most blogs are written while *in situ* or just after returning home). The chart shows increased blogger activity between summer and autumn. Blog entry creation seems to be a seasonal phenomenon, which largely coincides with the tourist high season. As can be seen, the highest period of blogging activity coincides with the summer season, with its peak point of entry creation in the month of August. Moreover, the months of autumn also have a relatively high activity of blog creation, probably because many of the blogs are written *a posteriori*, just after summer vacations. We can also appreciate a slight peak of activity around April, probably because of the Easter period.

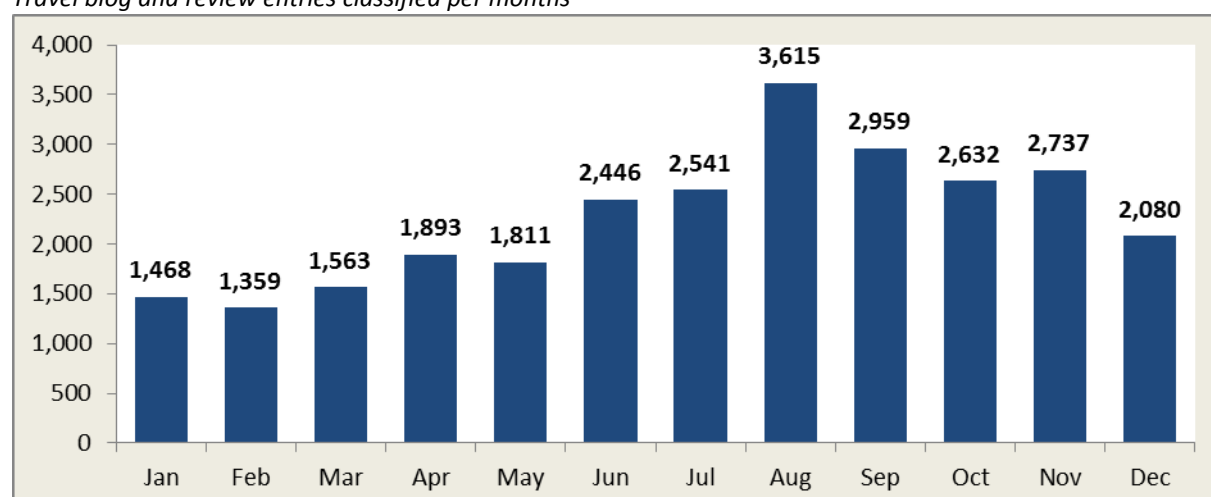
Table 3.8
 Travel blog and review entries classified per months

Web	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
GJ	35	30	55	85	92	149	159	161	211	106	52	29
MT	10	31	46	43	61	83	102	48	73	57	25	29
RT	20	16	25	32	60	50	50	48	78	32	33	34
TY	49	41	70	60	107	97	130	98	80	66	42	52
TB	216	172	254	241	274	378	287	190	244	183	196	99
TS	31	29	29	61	54	59	70	33	83	50	50	47
TP	65	64	115	92	142	228	202	122	150	129	105	65
TA	159	167	259	290	421	657	781	972	980	1,335	1,586	1,080
VT	883	809	710	989	600	745	760	1,943	1,060	674	648	645

Database: 27,104 blog entries in several languages

Figure 3.2

Travel blog and review entries classified per months



Database: See Table 3.8

3.1.3.4. Per brands

Table 3.9 and Figure 3.3 show the classification of blogs per tourist brands. Figure 3.3 visualizes the presence of the different brands and their municipalities among blogs, and therefore the possible visibility they may have. These data are relevant as they indicate how the same bloggers classified blogs on a geographical basis. For instance, if a blogger classified an entry as belonging to “Tarragona”, this entry was grouped, along with other entries, in the Costa Daurada brand. The numbers indicate that the vast majority of blogs (82.54%) corresponded to blogs classified by bloggers as belonging to Barcelona. After that, but a long way behind, we can see that Costa Brava (6.84%) and Costa Barcelona (6.79%) blogs had a remarkable presence. Then come, above 1% of entry representation, the Catalunya Central (1.71%) and Costa Daurada brands (1.55%). The rest of the brands: Pyrenees (which includes Val d’Aran), Terres de l’Ebre and Terres de Lleida had just a token presence among blogs and reviews (below 0.5%) meaning that these brands were hardly represented among travel blog entries, at least according to the geographical classification ascribed by bloggers.

Table 3.9

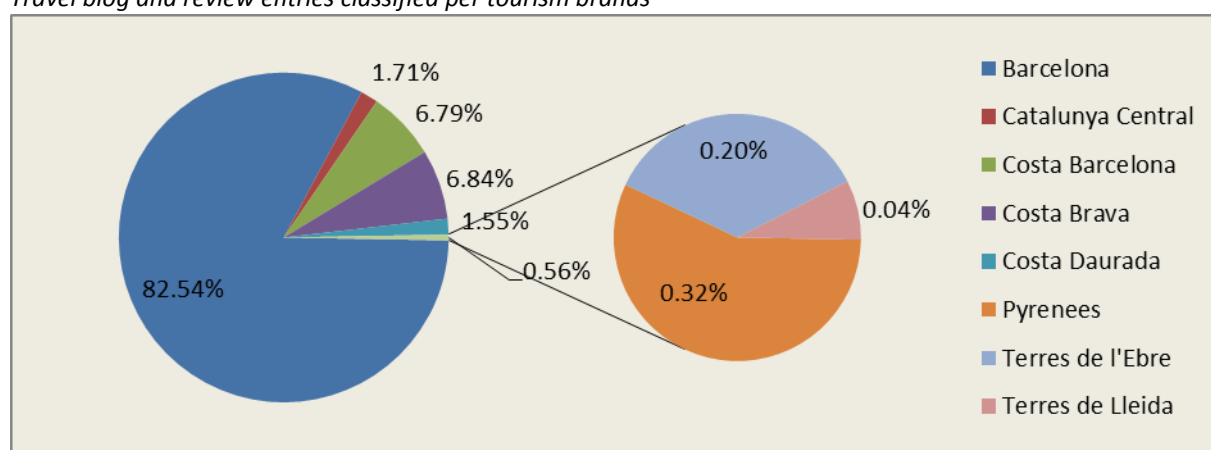
*Travel blog and review entries classified per tourism brands **

Web	Barna	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	CatCe	Pyren	tLlei	tEbre	UnClass
GJ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,164
MT	536	14	28	16	7	0	4	3	0
RT	409	9	33	18	8	0	1	0	0
TY	832	13	31	13	3	0	0	0	0
TB	2,348	53	131	40	40	7	8	1	106
TS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	596
TP	998	92	217	122	40	0	10	0	0
TA	7,121	62	338	1,034	86	14	19	0	13
VT	8,377	185	919	465	203	80	8	7	243

Database: 27,104 blog entries in several languages

*: There is no town which belongs to the Val d’Aran tourism brand

Figure 3.3
 Travel blog and review entries classified per tourism brands



Database: See Table 9.

3.1.4. Data language

The language of the blog and review entries was a fundamental issue for text content analysis. Although the websites' official language was usually English, bloggers are free to write in the language they prefer. Therefore, although the majority of entries (25,357) were in English, some of them were written in other languages. As shown in table 3.10, 299 entries were written in Spanish, 242 in Catalan, 95 in French, 90 in German, etc. All these entries written in languages other than English were removed from the sample to perform the category content analysis based on the English language.

Figure 3.4 reveals that 94% of all blog and review entries about Catalonia were written in English. Among the 6% of blogs which were not, the other languages used were Spanish in first place (17%), Catalan (14%), French (6%) and German (5%).

Table 3.10
 Language of blog and review entries

Web	ca	Da	de	en	es	fr	it	nl	pt*	oth.**
GJ	5	4	41	1,028	52	14	2	7	3	8
MT	2	0	0	592	4	4	0	0	2	4
RT	2	0	2	425	22	3	12	0	2	10
TB	16	0	1	757	16	10	0	3	0	89
TB	6	10	27	2,552	39	40	1	8	11	40
TS	0	0	0	583	4	1	0	0	3	5
TP	10	3	13	1,237	63	16	15	18	8	96
TA	4	0	0	8,603	20	0	0	0	0	60
VT	197	0	6	9,580	79	7	5	0	9	583
SUM	242	17	90	25,357	299	95	35	36	38	895

Database: 27,104 entries in several languages

Classification helped by the Language Detection Library for Java (code.google.com/p/language-detection/)

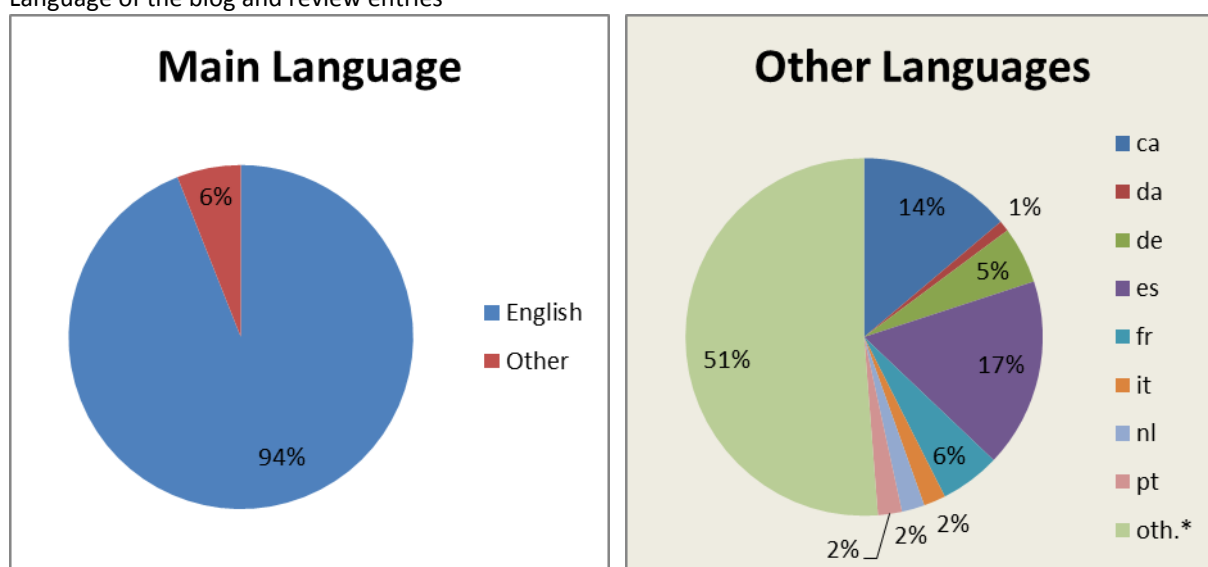
*: Standard two-letter language codes (ISO 639-1)

**: Minor languages (fi, hr, hu, no, pl, ro, sv) and dubious entries (multilanguage, insufficient text)

In relation to tourism discourse, our study reinforces Dann and Liebman Parrinello's (2009) idea that tourism language and communication are heavily dominated by the English language, especially in 2.0 media. In this respect, our research widely supports this idea as

no significant travel blog and review websites were found (with more than 100 entries about Catalonia) whose main language was not English and, within these websites, the great majority of blogs and reviews were written in English. Despite the fact that most tourists coming to Catalonia were French speakers (26%), and that English speakers in total accounted for less than 20% of the tourist public coming to Catalonia (see table 2.3), the social media, at least travel blogs and reviews, were clearly dominated by the English language and the English speaking countries, and hence the great majority of entries about Catalonia (94%) were written in this language. The rest of languages (including French, German, Spanish and Catalan) had only a token presence.

Figure 3.4
 Language of the blog and review entries



ca=Catalan; da=Danish; de=German; es=Spanish; fr=French; it=Italian; nl=Dutch; pt=Portuguese; oth.=Other
 oth: Minor languages (fi, hr, hu, no, pl, ro, sv) and dubious entries (multilanguage, insufficient text)













3.1.5. Data mining

After downloading the files for analysis came the data mining process which ordered data and examined aspects such as who is blogging. Regarding the subject of **who is blogging** we obtained data about the countries bloggers and reviewers come from. These data are important because perceived images may vary according to the distance between the origin country and the destination. They may also vary depending on cultural background and nationality, and moreover it is important to know if the blogger's origins are similar to those of the tourist public coming to the destination. However, not all websites provide information about the demographics of their members, and member profiles were incomplete. On many websites, filling in your member profile is not compulsory. Only the website TravellersPoint.com provides real data on its members. In the case of this website the largest number of bloggers comes from the U.S., followed by the UK, and then from Australia and next from Canada.

In the case of TravelPod.com, we have the directive <dt>Visitors</dt> which enables obtaining the number of all-time visitors to the site and of the present monthly visitors. For example, in the month of December 2011, the html pages about Catalonia had a mean of 40.7 visitors. However, this information cannot be obtained for all the websites.

We obtained the top countries of origin of six of the travel blog websites (the ones with this information). In table 3.11 we can see that in all travel blog and review websites the major country of origin of the bloggers writing about Catalonia was the US. After that came the UK, then Canada and Australia. What we observed at first sight was that the top four blogger origins are from English speaking countries and Anglo-Saxon culture and that, except for the UK, they are not among the top countries of origin of tourists visiting Catalonia (see also table 2.3).

Table 3.11
Top countries of origin of bloggers

Web	 au	 ca	 de	 es	 fr	 ie	 il	 it	 nl+be	 nz	 uk	 us
RT	36	32	4	8	3	2	0	2	4	5	23	103
TY	26	36	8	26	5	10	4	7	62	5	46	209
TP	149	100	14	38	11	10	2	10	4	23	70	315
TS	54	21	2	6	1	2	1	1	2	11	25	61
TA	191	275	39	217	53	272	59	43	96	29	1,587	2,049
VT	32	29	27	142	19	22	15	32	87	8	234	286

Database: 8,661 profiles with the *isFrom*, *livesIn*, *location*, *hometown*, or *citizenship* field

The data we obtained about the origins of bloggers and reviewers writing about Catalonia were compared to the data about the origins of the general travel public in Catalonia. This was done in order to determine whether the bloggers writing about Catalonia were a representative sample of the tourists who choose Catalonia as a holiday destination, and whether the fact that blogs were written in English meant that bloggers came from English speaking countries. This comparison recalls the concerns of Choi et al. (2007) about travel bloggers' representativity of the general tourist public and of data generalizability.

By comparing the different countries of origin of bloggers and the tourist public we observed that origins, in general, do not coincide. In the case of the general travel public to Catalonia, the nationalities with the largest number of tourists are France, the United Kingdom the Netherlands and Belgium (see table 2.3). Instead, most bloggers come from English speaking countries in this order: the US, the UK, Canada and Australia (table 3.11). The only coincident country of origin was the UK. Only the UK also appeared among both the first tourist countries sending tourists to Catalonia (13%) and the first countries of bloggers writing about Catalonia (more than 26%). The rest of the countries from which most bloggers come (USA, Canada and Australia) represent just a tiny part of the total tourist public of Catalonia. The clearest example is that of the US, which accounts for only 4% of tourists in Catalonia but instead they were the most numerous group to write about Catalonia and account for more than 40% of bloggers writing about Catalonia. Both Australia and Canada had percentages above 6.5% of blog and review entry creation, while their percentages over the total incoming tourists is very low. Instead, the country sending the most tourists to Catalonia, which is France (26%), very close geographically, barely accounts for 1% of the travel blog and review entries about Catalonia. This may be due to several reasons: for example in the case of French tourists, the low presence of French people writing about trips to Catalonia may be due to language barriers (most of the content of the websites under study are in English) as well as to the proximity of the two locations (France and Catalonia share a common border). As Catalonia is so close to France, tourists may not be interested in

describing a region that is probably already familiar to their friends and relatives or to themselves. It may also be that writing travel stories online is a more consolidated tradition in Anglo-Saxon countries.

This demographic aspect related to geography may influence the formation and transmission of tourist image. As Akehurst (2008) and Carson (2008), among others, explain, still today just who is blogging and their profiles are widely unknown. In this sense we contribute to enlarging the corpus of the literature by identifying bloggers' countries of origin. These data demonstrate that it is to a great extent bloggers from the countries farthest away (USA, Australia, Canada, etc.) who write more about Catalonia and that they mostly come from English speaking countries and Anglo-Saxon culture. These findings imply that the so-called "credible" online user-generated image is probably written in its majority by people who reside very far away that may have very different (idyllic, stereotyped or distorted) images from the one projected from the destination. For long-distance tourists, probably, cultural identity issues on a country without state will not be well-known. In addition, recalling Richards's (2002) ideas, these tourists coming from distant places will probably have short and superficial stays. Hence, interaction at the destination will be lower and fewer cultural elements in common can make these tourists perceive, and later transmit, probably idyllic, distorted or more distant images from reality.

If we accept that representations are an "essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture" (Hall, 2002) it can be expected that the representations created by these bloggers from distant countries have a greater potential to influence the image construction of members of their same culture, and probably from other cultures too, rendering the potential influence of local organizations more limited. Indeed, representations speak more about the ideas, feelings, values and concepts of those who produced them than about the objects themselves (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). Hence, in the case of Catalonia it is the most distant tourists in origin who write the most about it, probably reflecting their own system of values and representations.

3.1.6. Data dissemination

Different measures to see the visibility, usage and size of both official tourism websites and travel blog and review hosting websites were conducted.

In our case study, popularity was not measured because although data about travel blogs and review websites could be easily obtained, data about most official tourism websites were not available as they have traffic volumes below the threshold of the application of Google DoubleClick AdPlanner. The size of the subset of Catalonia data was already calculated for official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. See table 3.4 for travel blogs and reviews and table 3.3 for official tourism websites

3.1.6.1. Indexed pages

- Official tourism websites

Table 3.12 shows the indexed pages that the official tourism websites chosen for the study have, according to some popular search engines. This shows the visibility and potential reach

of the information of these websites. Some considerations should be made about table 3.12. In the first place, we should consider that the information in English about tourism of Catalonia is only a part of the websites and instead, the number of indexed pages refers to the whole website. Therefore, the number of indexed pages does not only refer to pages in English (which is the language of study). Moreover, Spain.info contains tourist information about Spain in general and its 17 autonomous communities, as well as GenCat.cat which contains administrative information about all the departments of the Catalan Government.

Once these considerations have been explained, if we take Google search engine as a reference, we observe that the domain of GenCat.Cat is the one with the most indexed pages, followed by Spain.Info. This is comprehensible given that both domains contain plenty of broader administrative information and information in multiple languages.

Concerning the regional tourist brands, we observed that according to Google the most visible one is the Costa Brava websites (CostaBrava.org). This is followed by the Val d'Aran website (VisitValdAran.com) which, despite having a low number of incoming tourists if compared to other brands, has a well-positioned and visible website. Then comes the website of TurismePropBarcelona.cat in third place, which corresponds to some of the brands surrounding Barcelona.

Surprisingly, the website of the Costa Daurada brand (CostaDaurada.info) had an extremely low number of indexed pages if compared to the other websites. This is unexpected as the brand is one of the most touristy of Catalonia whilst its website is invisible in terms of indexed pages and has a very low potential to reach a tourist audience. In general, indexed pages of official sites were considerably lower than those observed for travel blog hosting websites (see table 3.13)

Table 3.12

Official tourism websites' indexed pages checked in some popular web search engines at 2012-03-01

Domain (particular acronym)	Altavista	Ask	Bing	Google
BarcelonaTurisme.com (BT)	241,000	3,520	61,400	27,400
CostaBrava.org (CB)	14,800	3,110	11,500	116,000
CostaDaurada.info (CD)	118	178	178	439
GenCat.cat (GC)	265,000	212,000	213,000	8,210,000
LleidaTur.com (LT)	9,200	1,900	3,870	23,000
Spain.info (SP)	199,000	59,700	162,000	1,510,000
TerresDelEbre.org (TE)	11,800	1,250	7,260	33,400
TurismePropBarcelona.cat (PB)	19,400	5,340	3,150	109,000
VisitPirineus.com (VP)	844	176	150	58,000
VisitValdAran.com (VV)	4,330	1,980	2,590	115,000

Source: Query (site:domain) in www.altavista.com, www.ask.com, www.bing.com and www.google.com

• Travel blogs and reviews

As explained, visibility measures such as indexed pages in popular web search engines are very important when dealing with online information and image as they indicate the potential reach these have. Today, almost everyone gets online information through search engines. Hence, in the online world being indexed and to what degree means existing or not, having the potential to reach a large public or not. The results on the number of indexed

pages found in different search engines for the different travel blog hosting websites, shown in table 3.13, indicate that TripAdvisor was by far the most visible website with the highest number of indexed pages in all search engines, outnumbering the second most visible website (TravelPod.com) by a rate of 10 to 1. This means that TripAdvisor.com has a great potential to reach other tourists or users who consult the site having a great potential to transmit user-generated image. The travel blog website with the lowest number of indexed pages was TravBuddy.com.

Table 3.13

Indexed pages of travel blog and review hosting websites checked in some web search engines at 2012-03-01

Domain (particular acronym)	Altavista	Ask	Bing	Google
GetJealous.com (GJ)	13,400	4,860	9,160	716,000
MyTripJournal.com (MT)	36,600	3,780	35,600	921,000
RealTravel.com (RT)	295,000	107,000	288,000	2,630,000
TravBuddy.com (TY)	178,000	30,900	242,000	282,000
TravelBlog.org (TB)	627,000	177,000	506,000	8,860,000
TravellersPoint.com (TS)	186,000	56,600	215,000	1,380,000
TravelPod.com (TP)	1,470,000	976,000	1,320,000	11,400,000
TripAdvisor.com (TA)	11,100,000	2,620,000	11,200,000	116,000,000
VirtualTourist.com (VT)	800,000	585,000	1,490,000	7,910,000

Source: Query (site:domain) in www.altavista.com, www.ask.com, www.bing.com and www.google.com

• Comparison

If we compare both tables of indexed pages we see that the difference in visibility between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews is huge. Travel blog and review websites were in general far more visible than official tourism websites. If we take Google search engine, for example, as a reference we see how the leading travel review hosting website (TripAdvisor.com) was almost fifteen times more visible than the leading official tourism website (GenCat.cat) (even if the latter domain contains multiple areas and subjects, other than tourism, relative to the Catalan government). The scale of indexed pages was different too, while travel blogs and reviews ranged from hundreds of thousands of indexed pages to millions or tens of millions of pages, official tourism websites usually ranged between tens of thousands of indexed pages and hundreds of thousands (although two websites were in the range of millions of indexed pages). Moreover, one official tourism website had only a few hundred indexed pages. This difference in visibility was also reflected in the other search engines.

3.1.6.2. Presence in social media

To evaluate the presence of websites hosting travel blogs and reviews on other social networks, we obtained altmetric data from a sample of social media platforms, as explained in the methodology: Delicious bookmarks, Google+ shares, Digg and Reddit submissions, Facebook and Twitter mentions, StumbleUpon likes, YouTube videos and Wikipedia external links.

• Official tourism websites

In the case of official tourism websites, the two websites with a major presence in the social media were the Spanish state (SP) and the Catalan regional (GC) websites. However, these

two websites have many contents other than tourism to Catalonia and because of this, these results accounted for the whole site and not for the specific case of study.

In the case of sub-regional brand websites, BarcelonaTurisme.com was in the lead, with the highest number of appearances in Facebook, Twitter, Delicious, and StumbleUpon. Besides, LleidaTur.com clearly stood out from the rest in Youtube, and was also in the lead in Wikipedia.

Table 3.14

Altmetrics of official tourism websites at 2013-02-01

	Delicious	Google+	Reddit	Facebook	Twitter	StumbleUpon	YouTube	Wikipedia
BT	152	17	0	712	22	20	6	4
CB	0	7	0	516	14	0	6	8
CD	0	0	0	34	2	0	0	2
GC	186	44	6	120,000	7,853	3	897	386
LT	0	0	0	346	0	0	285	13
SP	276	34	1	8,020	26,537	85	738	118
TE	9	13	0	21	0	0	1	3
PB	0	0	0	144	0	0	2	0
VP	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
VV	0	2	0	236	1	0	0	0

Source: *See Table 2.7*

• Travel blogs and reviews

In the case of travel blog and review websites we observed that the most prominent website is TripAdvisor.com in Facebook, Twitter, Delicious, Reddit and Wikipedia. VirtualTourist stood out in the case of StumbleUpon and TravelPod.com in the case of YouTube.

Table 3.15

Altmetrics of travel blog and review hosting websites at 2013-02-01

	Delicious	Google+	Reddit	Facebook	Twitter	StumbleUpon	YouTube	Wikipedia
GJ	45	7	17	443	1256	14	108	7
MT	74	0	---	66	103	75	3	4
RT	18	---	2	78	145	154	8	37
TY	1051	6	11	503	2804	262	25	35
TB	773	150	117	3210	35,188	4,676	183	162
TS	766	969	120	1390	8,343	323	252	36
TP	1170	840	128	6870	62,933	1,481	51,600	117
TA	7475	1,324,264	179	326,000	107,958	1,481	25,800	497
VT	2949	32	34	4010	3,597	5,544	1010	579

Source: *See Table 2.7*

• Comparison

By comparing both types of websites we clearly saw that usually travel blog and review websites were more present in the social media than the official tourism websites under study in all the different social media (except for the cases of GenCat.cat and Spain.info which convey information not related to Catalonia). Therefore, in this sense the information travel blog and review websites convey (about Catalonia and other destination) was more visible in the social media and had a major capacity to reach a broader public.

3.1.6.3. Link-based ranks

In the case of link-based ranks, both official tourism websites and travel blog and review websites seemed to have similar link-based ranks at first sight. However, in the case of official tourism websites the ones with a higher Google PR rank were the Spanish state (SP) and Catalan regional (GC) ones with a score of 8, which contain more information apart from that of tourism in Catalonia. The next most prominent website was BarcelonaTurisme.com, which had a considerably high PR (7). The rest of sub-regional websites had a score of 5 (just fair) except for Costa Daurada (CD) which has a PR of 0 for it being too low. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, TripAdvisor.com (TA) was in the lead (8) followed by VirtualTourist.com (VT) (7). The rest of websites hosting travel blogs and reviews had scores of between 4 and 6, except for RT which has -1 because the site is now down.

With regard to Yandex CY, in the case of official tourism websites similarly to Google PR, Spain.info (SP) was in the lead, followed at a distance by GenCat.cat and BarcelonaTurisme.com (BT). In this case, the next highest ranking website was CostaBrava.org (CB). LT, PB and VV had a low score (10) while the rest of websites scored 0 points. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, similarly TripAdvisor.com (TA) is far in the lead, followed by VirtualTourist.com (VT) and TravelPod.com (TP). In general the CY ranks of travel blog and review websites were higher than those of official tourism websites.

Table 3.16
 Link-based and visit-based ranks at 2013-02-01

Link-based and visit-based ranks at 2015-02-01

Official tourism websites				Travel blogs and reviews			
	Google PR (link-based)	Yandex CY (link-based)	Alexa Rank (visit-based)		Google PR (link-based)	Yandex CY (link-based)	Alexa Rank (visit-based)
BT	7/10	120	163,418	GJ	4/10	20	60,436
CB	5/10	40	391,977	MT	5/10	10	129,644
CD	0/10	-	-	RT	-1/10	20	-
GC	8/10	170	9,304	TY	5/10	40	21,676
LT	5/10	10	781,355	TB	6/10	120	11,631
SP	8/10	650	40,758	TS	5/10	70	19,578
TE	5/10	-	-	TP	6/10	350	14,218
PB	5/10	10	-	TA	8/10	1,300	251
VP	5/10	-	-	VT	7/10	375	5,739
VV	5/10	10	-				

Source: SavedWebHistory.com















Again, we observed how in terms of link-based ranks visibility, travel blog and review sites were better positioned, especially if compared to the sub-regional websites.

3.1.6.4. Geographical distribution of users

In our case study, this indicator was studied for both travel blog and review websites and official tourism websites. It must be noted that this measure accounts for the general users of the websites, not of the users of the specific case study pages. Again, in this case low traffic sites were not considered.

Table 3.17

Worldwide audience (percentage of visitors by country) at 2012-05-31

	 au	 ca	 cn	 de	 fr	 id	 in	 it	 jp	 ph	 pk	 th	 uk	 us
GJ	-	-	19.5	-	-	1.6	25.2	-	-	5.5	3.9	-	5.5	9.6
MT	6.0	-	-	-	-	-	27.8	-	-	-	-	-	3.3	19.9
RT	-	-	-	-	-	-	33.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.7
TY	1.3	2.1	1.5	3.5	4.0	2.5	19.7	2.6	-	3.8	1.1	3.5	5.7	14.4
TB	1.8	2.0	5.2	2.4	1.2	1.5	24.0	1.5	1.9	2.3	1.1	2.6	5.6	14.9
TS	2.4	1.8	7.4	3.8	1.4	1.0	21.1	1.5	3.1	2.5	1.2	1.6	6.7	12.6
TP	2.2	2.2	6.0	3.3	1.8	2.4	13.9	1.7	4.1	1.7	0.8	1.7	4.6	18.9
TA	1.5	2.9	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.0	5.8	1.7	2.1	1.3	0.9	2.4	2.2	45.5
VT	2.2	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.7	0.9	13.8	2.5	3.2	2.7	2.6	2.1	7.1	20.7

Source: *Alexa.com/siteinfo/*

In the case of travel blogs and reviews we observed a very strong presence of Asian countries audiences (India, China, the Philippines, Pakistan, etc.) probably due to their great number of inhabitants, followed by the USA and the United Kingdom. In general, we observed how the audience of travel blog and review websites is international, attaining many countries and continents.

However, in the case of official tourism websites about Catalonia, most of them only appeared to have a significant audience from Spain and a very small international audience. The Spanish state website (Spain.info SP) had an international audience mostly from EU Countries (Germany, France, Italy and the UK) and the United States. The Catalan regional website, GenCat.Cat, had an eminently Spanish audience (92.2%). However, in both cases the websites have plenty more information apart from that on tourism in Catalonia so we cannot know exactly the audience specifically for the tourist information about Catalonia.

In the case of sub-regional websites of the Catalan tourist brands, all had their main or sole audience coming from Spain. Apart from the Spanish audience, only BarcelonaTurisme.com (BT) had a slightly significant international audience, mostly from France, Germany, the UK and the United States, and CostaBrava.org from the United Kingdom.

These results showed how the international projection of travel blog and review websites is much greater than that of official tourism websites, and therefore the information about Catalonia they contain has the potential to reach a broader audience.

3.1.6.5. Visit-based ranks

In the case of Alexa's visit-based Rank, we observed how, in general, travel blog and review websites had much higher ranks (closer to 1 or to the top position). TripAdvisor.com was by far the best ranked with a very high position (251) of all websites. Usually, these website ranks move between positions in the thousands and the tens of thousands. Instead, in the case of official tourism websites, five sub-regional brands either did not appear or were not ranked because their number of visits was too low. Among the websites ranked, GC and SP are in the lead, although as previously commented, these websites contain plenty of other information apart from tourism about Catalonia. Among the ranked sub-regional websites, BT is in the lead, followed by CB and LT. Their ranks are in the order of the 100 thousands. Therefore, in terms of visits to the websites, travel blog and review websites received more visits, in general, and were therefore more used, than official tourism websites.

3.2. Results

This section deals with the results of the content analysis of travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites. In part 3.2.1.1, first, the wider database was used to obtain the preliminary results (first 50 words, Gaudí and his masterpieces). This extended database included 27,104 entries of travel blogs and reviews in several languages and the whole database of official tourism web pages consisting of 3,171 html pages and pdf files at least in English. Then, when it came to analysing the data with the categories (tourism attraction factors, feelings and dichotomies, and cultural identity) and to compare the images of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews (corresponding to sections 3.2.1.2, 3.2.1.3, 3.2.1.4 and 3.2.1.5), a smaller database was used. In this database only travel blog entries and reviews in English were left. In the case of official tourism websites, only files exclusively in English were left. This smaller database consisted of 25,357 travel blog and review entries and 3,124 official tourism website files. In this section, a zoom to study specifically the Catalan language in relation to identity was incorporated and a small sample of only 100 files was used for this purpose (3.2.1.4.5).

In section 3.2.2, the database of travel blogs and reviews was reduced again as only the entries that had been purposefully geographically classified by bloggers were left. Therefore, unclassified entries were discarded in this section. The new database accounted for 23,435 travel blog and review entries in English. Finally, with the spatial index measures (3.2.3) the database used was slightly smaller as two of the brands had very few entries and thus these measures would not be significant for them. Therefore, with the exclusion of these two brands (Terres de Lleida and Terres de l'Ebre) the number of files used for spatial indexes was 23,387.

It should be noted that for each of the different groups of categories, different measures were applied concerning their presence throughout the whole database, their presence per file and their correlations. Localization and specialization measures were only applied to attraction factors.

3.2.1 Compared results between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews

After preparing all the data for analysis, an initial exploratory word count study was conducted with the whole database of travel blogs (including 27,104 entries in several languages) and the whole database of official tourism web pages (consisting of 3,171 html pages and pdf files). Then both word counts were compared.

3.2.1.1. Main descriptive results

This part shows the exploratory analysis and subsequent preliminary results that were very important to have a general idea of the content with which the research would deal, as well as to easily spot differences and resemblances between the two databases. These results gave an initial idea of the type of content the research would encounter and possible categories to be used to analyse the data.

3.2.1.1.1. Most frequent words

In this section we drew up a list consisting of the first 50 most used words, both in travel blog entries and on official tourism websites (Table 3.18). The lists were drawn up with the results provided by the Site Content Analyzer software.

What we first observed is that in both lists “Barcelona” is the most frequent word, although in the case of travel blogs this word has a much higher site-wide density and average weight than in the case of official tourism websites. Moreover, we observed an extraordinary presence of the word “Barcelona” in the case of travel blogs and reviews, which appears five times more than the second most frequent word. Instead, in the case of official tourism websites this proportion is much lower, “Barcelona” presence is about one half higher than that of the second word. This means that in travel blogs and reviews the word “Barcelona” is ten times more frequent than on official tourism websites if compared to the second most frequent word. Furthermore, the weight of Barcelona in travel blogs and reviews is extremely high (40.02) meaning that this word is very often placed in the title of the blog or review or in a very visible position. All of the latter demonstrates the enormous strength and potential of Barcelona as an element of perceived-transmitted image of Catalonia.

The second and probably the most remarkable first sight observation was that of the case of travel-blogs (perceived-transmitted image). Gaudí and his masterpieces have a clearly predominant position: “Sagrada família” comes second in the ranking of total word counts, “Gaudí” comes in fourth place, “Parc Güell” in sixth, and “Casa Milà/La Pedrera” in thirtieth place. All of these words have very high site-wide densities and average weights. However, in the case of official tourism websites none of Gaudí’s masterpieces, nor the name Gaudí itself appear among the first fifty most frequent words.

Among the most frequent words we see place-destination names such as “Barcelona”, “Girona” and “Montserrat” in the case of travel blogs and reviews, and in the case of official tourism websites we find the names of “Barcelona”, “Girona” and “Lleida”, “Pyrenees”, “Tarragona”, and “Empordà”. Only in the case of projected image through official tourism websites does a Catalan tourist brand name (“Costa Brava”) appear among the first 50 words.

Regarding regional-country or cultural identity references, in the case of travel blogs the word “Spain” appears in eleventh position and the word “Spanish” in fourteenth place. However, the words “Catalonia” or “Catalan” do not appear among the top 50 words in the case of blogs. By contrast, in the case of official tourism websites the word “Catalonia” is the third in the list rank with a high site-wide density and average weight. The word “Catalan” appears in tenth place, and “Catalunya” in twenty-eighth. In the case of official tourism websites, the word “Spain” also appears in twenty-second position.

After that, other significant words are those related to tourist modalities or attraction factors such as “city”, “museum”, “beach”, “church”, “ramblas”, “cathedral” and “building”, in the case of travel-blog and review image, and “museum”, “church”, “city”, “Romanesque”, “beach”, “art”, “festival”, “natural”, “mountain”, “medieval”, “restaurants”, “castle” and “gothic”, in the case of official tourism websites.

Adjectives and feelings can also be found among these words. In the case of travel blogs, those are positive adjectives: “great”, “good”, “beautiful”, “amazing” and “fun”. In the case

of official tourism websites, they refer to attractions such as “cultural” or “natural”, and we can also find the positive adjective “great”.

It should be noted that the nature of the words employed by travel bloggers and reviewers and by official tourism websites is different. Official tourism websites are informative and descriptive in nature, while travel blogs and reviews reflect travel stories full of experiences, feelings, visited places, opinions, etc. This difference in the nature of the language used may explain some of the differences between both types of files, such as the use of informative words by official tourism websites (century, centre, oficina, information) and the usage of circumstantial day-to-day words, such as those related to transportation (bus, train, walk, metro) by travel blogs and reviews.

All in all, we observed the presence of places, cultural identity references, tourist attraction factors and feelings and adjectives, all categories that will be used later.

Table 3.18
Fifty most frequent words

OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES					TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS				
Rank	Word	Count	Site-wide Density	Average Weight	Rank	Word	Count	Site-wide Density	Average Weight
1	Barcelona	8105	0.69%	9.31	1	Barcelona	100248	3.36%	40.02
2	Catalonia	5628	0.48%	11.59	2	Sagrada Família	18,859	0.62%	38.65
3	route	4904	0.42%	11.05	3	city	17372	0.58%	9.78
4	area	3665	0.31%	4.37	4	Gaudí	16777	0.56%	17.80
5	tourist	3629	0.31%	11.65	5	great	13222	0.44%	10.85
6	museum	3516	0.30%	12.48	6	Parc Güell	12482	0.40%	40.27
7	Girona	3344	0.28%	15.96	7	people	11706	0.39%	4.30
8	town	3071	0.26%	4.57	8	night	10941	0.36%	7.20
9	Catalan	3055	0.26%	2.74	9	way	10800	0.36%	6.62
10	centre	2950	0.25%	4.90	10	tour	10673	0.35%	9.61
11	century	2924	0.25%	2.08	11	Spain	10540	0.35%	19.72
12	turisme	2893	0.25%	14.91	12	good	10231	0.34%	5.56
13	church	2793	0.24%	5.82	13	place	9941	0.33%	5.98
14	city	2742	0.23%	3.60	14	Spanish	8802	0.29%	9.06
15	museu	2702	0.23%	7.75	15	bus	8729	0.29%	10.66
16	oficina	2582	0.22%	21.37	16	museum	8419	0.28%	18.83
17	romanesque	2558	0.22%	7.01	17	beach	8320	0.28%	13.34
18	information	2553	0.22%	11.49	18	park	7837	0.26%	15.29
19	casa	2515	0.21%	4.65	19	street	7597	0.25%	11.08
20	Spain	2494	0.21%	46.73	20	church	7573	0.25%	29.22
21	beach	2485	0.21%	29.44	21	train	7436	0.25%	5.73
22	Lleida	2313	0.20%	8.37	22	nice	7280	0.24%	6.92
23	cultural	2297	0.20%	15.67	23	beautiful	7099	0.24%	11.95
24	activities	2288	0.19%	4.63	24	ramblas	6985	0.23%	25.24
25	tourism	2169	0.18%	18.34	25	trip	6892	0.23%	13.76
26	Catalunya	2138	0.18%	8.98	26	Girona	6757	0.22%	42.01
27	Pyrenees	2137	0.18%	15.15	27	cathedral	6628	0.22%	20.13
28	Tarragona	2060	0.18%	14.59	28	amazing	6408	0.21%	10.07
29	Empordà	2056	0.17%	7.47	29	walk	6331	0.21%	7.46

30	art	2014	0.17%	5.15	30	Casa Milà/La Pedrera	6295	0.21%	42.54
31	visit	2003	0.17%	6.94	31	visit	6282	0.21%	10.57
32	festival	1990	0.17%	23.29	32	town	6049	0.20%	7.56
33	routes	1939	0.17%	9.57	33	things	6045	0.20%	29.63
34	great	1926	0.16%	5.53	34	best	6026	0.20%	12.54
35	turismo	1908	0.16%	19.26	35	old	5946	0.20%	8.90
36	old	1889	0.16%	3.77	36	metro	5782	0.19%	8.51
37	natural	1834	0.16%	4.93	37	hotel	5712	0.19%	5.60
38	beaches	1827	0.16%	35.47	38	Montserrat	5709	0.19%	34.99
39	golf	1818	0.15%	11.44	39	top	5608	0.19%	8.73
40	river	1751	0.15%	3.70	40	building	5590	0.19%	9.94
41	local	1749	0.15%	21.98	41	photo	5576	0.19%	28.75
42	Costa Brava	1747	0.15%	6.82	42	know	5131	0.17%	2.73
43	year	1723	0.15%	2.36	43	bar	5024	0.17%	12.56
44	mountain	1683	0.14%	5.28	44	area	4974	0.17%	5.01
45	medieval	1674	0.14%	8.69	45	food	4954	0.16%	9.12
46	hotel	1666	0.14%	2.05	46	home	4931	0.16%	5.20
47	park	1657	0.14%	7.18	47	walking	4921	0.16%	8.97
48	restaurants	1636	0.14%	19.23	48	hostel	4779	0.16%	2.97
49	castle	1634	0.14%	9.09	49	fun	4732	0.16%	11.36
50	gothic	1616	0.14%	2.37	50	days	4731	0.16%	5.06

Database: 27,104 travel blogs and reviews in several languages and 3,171 official tourism files

3.2.1.1.2. Gaudí and his masterpieces

As seen above, the first general overview of the most frequent words both for projected and perceived-transmitted images showed that the presence and rank of Gaudí and his masterpieces is surprisingly high, even predominant, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, whilst in the case of official tourism websites none of these words is among the first fifty. This first important dissonance between the two image contents needs further exploration.

Table 3.19 shows different parameters (rank, count, site-wide density and average weight) for the word “Gaudí” and his five most popular masterpieces according to travel blog content: “Sagrada Família”, “Parc Güell”, “Casa Milà/La Pedrera”, “Casa Batlló” and “Palau Güell”. These words and information are compared to the data obtained from official tourism websites.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the masterpiece “Sagrada Família” is the second most frequent word, mentioned a total of 18,859 times and having a very high site-wide density of 6.2‰. This means that 6 words every 1000 in travel blog entry text are “Sagrada Família”. On the contrary, in the case of official tourism websites “Sagrada Família” comes in 884th place in the rank with a low site-wide density of 0.2‰, meaning it is not one of the main sights promoted by official websites. A similar phenomenon occurs with “Gaudí”, “Parc Güell”, “Casa Milà/La Pedrera”, and “Casa Batlló”. All of these words are very highly ranked in bloggers’ texts (“Sagrada Família”, “Gaudí” and “Parc Güell” are among the top 10 words written by bloggers), they have very high site-wide densities (“Gaudí” and “Parc Güell” are mentioned more than 5 and 4 times respectively every 1000 words). If we add up the total site-wide densities of Gaudí and his works we obtain that about 2 of every 100 words are

either the name of Gaudí or of one of his masterpieces. Their average weights are also very high meaning that these words are placed in the most visible spaces of the entries: the title, the subheadings, etc. All of this means that in the case of the image contained in travel blogs and reviews, Gaudí and his masterpieces are the main tourist symbol of Catalonia. From this point on, the importance of Gaudí and his works for travel blog image cannot be dismissed.

By contrast, official tourism websites seem to mention a greater variety of words and do not promote Gaudí so fiercely, probably due to his already known popularity or to promote other parts of the territory and other attractions in a more “politically correct” way.

Table 3.19
Presence of Gaudí and his masterpieces

Keyword*	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS				OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES			
	Rank	Count	Site-wide Density	Average Weight	Rank	Count	Site-wide Density	Average Weight
Sagrada Família	2	18,800	0.62%	38.66	884	235	0.02%	9.66
Gaudí	4	16,778	0.56%	17.80	119	1,091	0.09%	4.77
Parc Güell	6	12,482	0.40%	40.27	1,106	193	0.02%	11.60
Casa Milà / La Pedrera	30	6,295	0.21%	42.54	700	289	0.02%	8.09
Casa Batlló	60	4,297	0.13%	34.20	1,512	141	0.01%	9.57
Palau Güell	1,185	439	0.01%	47.52	3,043	66	0.01%	6.36

Database: 27,104 blog entries in several languages and 3,171 official tourism files.

*: The mentions of other Gaudí masterpieces are not significant

3.2.1.1.3. Catalan tourist brands and towns

Now, only the travel blogs in English and the official tourism web pages in English are left for further analysis. From now on, the different categories explained in the methodology chapter 2.3.9 are used for subsequent analysis (see table 2.9). This section is based on the categories about geography.

- Tourist brand presence with reference to the total databases

In Figure 3.5 we observe the differences between the presence and importance of the different brands through the denominations of their names and especially of towns and destinations within them in travel blog entries and on official tourism web pages. Firstly, we can see that in the case of official tourism websites, all the Catalan Tourist Brand towns and denominations are mentioned and are considerably visible (except for the denominations corresponding to the Val d’Aran brand). As Table 3.20 shows, the denominations and towns that are most mentioned on the official websites are those pertaining to Costa Brava (18.24‰), then those of Pyrenees (9.45‰), Costa Daurada (8.18‰) and Barcelona in fourth place (7.68‰). Then come Terres de Lleida (6.13‰), Catalunya Central (4.94‰), Costa Barcelona (4.18‰) and finally, with the least presence, Val d’Aran (0.46‰). As we can see, in general the distribution of the mentioning of brands is quite regular, almost all the existing Catalan brands have a significant presence in the projected image.

Very differently, in the case of travel blog entries, the disproportion of the presence of the brands becomes evident: Barcelona with 32.88‰ of site-wide density is the main brand present a long way from the rest of the brands. The entire image within travel blogs seems to be concentrated in Barcelona. In the case of travel blogs, only three more brands have a

significant (although much smaller) presence: Costa Brava (4.66%), Costa Daurada (2.37%) and Costa Barcelona (1.38%). The rest of the brands are practically not mentioned in comparison to Barcelona (less than 1%).

It is significant that in the case of official tourism website image, Pyrenees especially, but also Terres de Lleida and Catalunya Central had a significant presence whilst in the case of travel blogs these brands were practically non-existent. In the case of official tourism sites the different brands' presence is more proportionate.

Table 3.20

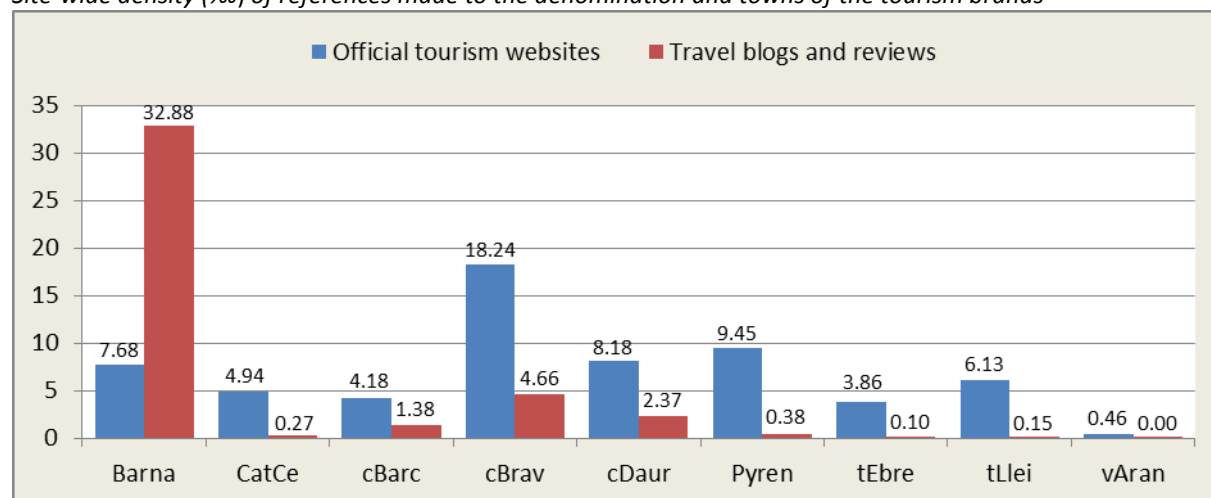
References made to the denomination and towns of the tourism brands

Brand	Official tourism websites (44,295 unique words)			Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 unique words)		
	Word count	Site density	Aver. weight	Word count	Site density	Aver. weight
Barna	7,423	7.68‰	10.44	91,797	32.88‰	39.27
CatCe	4,772	4.94‰	10.90	752	0.27‰	28.83
cBarc	4,046	4.18‰	11.20	3,865	1.38‰	34.49
cBrav	17,631	18.24‰	11.92	13,008	4.66‰	39.00
cDaur	7,909	8.18‰	10.14	6,629	2.37‰	45.10
Pyren	9,134	9.45‰	7.69	1,074	0.38‰	29.59
tEbre	3,732	3.86‰	5.93	268	0.10‰	35.78
tLlei	5,930	6.13‰	5.55	415	0.15‰	30.02
vAran	444	0.46‰	2.32	2	0.00‰	100.00

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

Figure 3.5

Site-wide density (‰) of references made to the denomination and towns of the tourism brands



Database: See table 3.20

• Brands' descriptive statistics per file

Descriptive statistics of official tourism website documents and of blog and review entries file-per-file reinforce the results obtained with the site-wide density measures (based on total words of the total database), as shown in table 3.21. We can observe that in the case of official tourism websites, the brand with the highest mean among the documents is Costa Brava, which appears 5.64 times on average in every document. This means, that either the Costa Brava name or one of its villages and towns appears more than five times in each document. After that come Pyrenees (2.92), Costa Daurada (2.53), in fourth place Barcelona (2.38), then Terres de Lleida (1.9), Catalunya Central (1.53), Costa Barcelona (1.3), Terres de

l'Ebre (1.19) and finally, with the lowest mean of mentions per file is the Val d'Aran brand (0.14). As we can observe comparing these results with data in table 2.3, the order of average mentions does not correspond at all to the proportion of the real inbound tourism by Catalan brands.

Besides, in the case of travel blogs and reviews the order brands follow is different to the order on official tourism websites and corresponds much more to the order of brands considering inbound tourism (see table 2.3). In first and most prominent place comes Barcelona, with an average 3.62 appearances per blog or travel review. After that, comes the second brand (but about seven times less frequent): Costa Brava and its towns and villages (0.51). Then come Costa Daurada (0.26) and Costa Barcelona (0.15). The rest of brands have very low means of mentions, meaning they are hardly mentioned by bloggers in comparison to the other brands. As we see, brands such as Pyrenees, which are strongly present within official tourism website documents, are barely mentioned by bloggers and reviewers.

Regarding standard deviation, we can see that in the case of official tourism websites, the two brands with major means also have major standard deviations, meaning that although their presence is high on average, this is irregularly spread. Similarly, in the case of travel blogs and reviews the two brands that have major means (Barcelona and Costa Brava) also have the major standard deviations, although these are much smaller than in the case of official tourism websites.

Table 3.21
Brands' descriptive statistics per file

Brand	Official tourism websites (44,295 unique words)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 unique words)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
Barna	7,423	2.38	14.324	205.179	91,797	3.62	6.029	36.346
CatCe	4,772	1.53	10.208	104.197	752	0.03	0.456	0.208
cBarc	4,046	1.3	7.455	55.582	3,865	0.15	1.646	2.711
cBrav	17,631	5.64	29.422	865.65	13,008	0.51	2.850	8.121
cDaur	7,909	2.53	14.673	215.284	6,629	0.26	1.465	2.146
Pyren	9,134	2.92	18.285	334.341	1,074	0.04	0.606	0.367
tEbre	3,732	1.19	8.501	72.262	268	0.01	0.199	0.040
tLlei	5,930	1.9	16.569	274.535	415	0.02	0.484	0.234
vAran	444	0.14	1.066	1.137	2	0	0.009	0

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

• Correlations between the brands

In the first place, we see that in general terms the correlations among the official tourism websites brands are stronger than in the case of travel blogs and reviews. In the case of official tourism websites (Table 3.22) we see that the strongest correlation between two brands is between Costa Brava and Pyrenees (0.603), meaning that these two brands, and their towns, appear or are promoted very often together in the different documents. The second strongest correlation is between Barcelona and Costa Barcelona (0.564). Such a strong correlation could be expected as these two brands are geographically attached,

indeed the Costa Barcelona area brand spreads around Barcelona to both sides, and therefore, both brands very often appear jointly. After that, another important correlation is in this case between Barcelona and Costa Daurada (0.445) meaning that official tourism websites link both brand territories and mention them together quite often. Then both Costa Barcelona (0.438) and Barcelona (0.417) are also strongly correlated to Catalunya Central brand, probably due to their geographical proximity and to the fact that, as they all border the Barcelona brand, many attraction factors and visits may be mentioned together. Another remarkable correlation is that of Pyrenees with Terres de Lleida (0.397). This link could be expected as both brands are very often promoted together under the name of “Lleida-Pirineus” and even the area’s local airport is called by both brands names.

Another strong correlation is that of Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada (0.389). Costa Daurada spreads to the south of Costa Barcelona and due to the geographical proximity and to the bonding with some cities of Costa Daurada and the southern part of Costa Barcelona (Tarragona and Sitges), these brands and their towns are also probably mentioned together. Similarly, Costa Daurada and Terres de l’Ebre also have a strong correlation in projected image (0.358). This is comprehensible as both brands are situated in Southern Catalonia and belonged until some years ago to the same tourist brand. It is remarkable that the Val d’Aran is weakly correlated to other brands except for Terres de Lleida (0.307) and Pyrenees (0.293) as these two brands surround the Vall d’Aran area which is located in Pyrenees. In table 3.22, only correlations above 0.350 were marked in red.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews (Table 3.23) the results are very different. The only significant correlations are, in general, very low if compared to the ones found on official tourism website documents. In this case, the strongest correlation can be found between Pyrenees and Terres de Lleida (0.160). This correlation was also found in the case of official tourism websites. This means that bloggers often mention both brands jointly, probably because of this joint image of “Lleida-Pirineus”, and also because these two are geographically close to one another. The second strongest correlation is found between Terres de Lleida and Costa Daurada (0.077), probably meaning that these two geographically attached brands and their towns and villages are often mentioned together, which could mean that some tourists visit both brands’ territories. Then we see a significant correlation between Costa Brava and Terres de l’Ebre (0.066) to which we find no reasonable explanation. Costa Daurada and Terres de l’Ebre have some kind of correlation too (0.32) which may be explained by their proximity and the fact that they used to be a single brand.

It is remarkable that two negative correlations are significant in the case of travel blogs and reviews, probably meaning that these brands may sometimes be exclusive: if tourists mention or visit one, they probably do not mention or visit the other (in the same entry). These negative correlations are found among the most touristy brand, Barcelona, and the two other most touristy sun and sea brands which do not border the Barcelona brand territory: the Costa Brava (-0.47) and Costa Daurada (-0.62). This could be explained by the fact that these territories are seen as different from each other and that they have enough entity to be tourist destinations in themselves, apart from Barcelona.

Table 3.22

Correlations between brands on official tourism websites

Brand	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	vAran
Barna	1.000	**0.417	**0.564	**0.313	**0.445	**0.204	**0.249	**0.275	*0.036
CatCe	0.417	1.000	**0.438	**0.304	**0.302	**0.277	**0.167	**0.216	**0.069
cBarc	0.564	0.438	1.000	**0.321	**0.389	**0.204	**0.198	**0.219	0.028
cBrav	0.313	0.304	0.321	1.000	**0.224	**0.603	**0.121	**0.127	*0.042
cDaur	0.445	0.302	0.389	0.224	1.000	**0.174	**0.358	**0.236	*0.044
Pyren	0.204	0.277	0.204	0.603	0.174	1.000	**0.083	**0.397	**0.293
tEbre	0.249	0.167	0.198	0.121	0.358	0.083	1.000	**0.123	0.010
tLlei	0.275	0.216	0.219	0.127	0.236	0.397	0.123	1.000	**0.307
vAran	0.036	0.069	0.028	0.042	0.044	0.293	0.010	0.307	1.000

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) files in English. (Highest correlations in bold).

Table 3.23

Correlations between brands in travel blogs and reviews

Brand	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	vAran
Barna	1.000	-0.008	0.006	** -0.047	** -0.062	-0.009	-0.009	0.003	-0.005
CatCe	-0.008	1.000	-0.001	0.000	-0.005	*0.014	0.000	0.008	-0.001
cBarc	0.006	-0.001	1.000	*0.013	-0.008	-0.006	-0.002	0.000	-0.001
cBrav	-0.047	0.000	0.013	1.000	-0.016	**0.025	**0.066	-0.002	-0.002
cDaur	-0.062	-0.005	-0.008	-0.016	1.000	**0.021	**0.032	**0.077	-0.002
Pyren	-0.009	0.014	-0.006	0.025	0.021	1.000	0.007	**0.160	-0.001
tEbre	-0.009	0.000	-0.002	0.066	0.032	0.007	1.000	-0.001	0.000
tLlei	0.003	0.008	0.000	-0.002	0.077	0.160	-0.001	1.000	0.000
vAran	-0.005	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.002	-0.001	0.000	0.000	1.000

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Database: 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English. (Highest correlations in bold).

3.2.1.2. Tourism attraction factors of Catalonia

This section presents the results based on attraction factor categories (general and specific). For a summary of categories for attraction factors, see Table 2.10.

3.2.1.2.1. General attraction factor presence with reference to the total databases

As shown in table 3.24, in the case of official tourism websites we can observe that the most mentioned attraction factor is by far “tangible heritage” (71.50%), followed, at a distance by “nature and active tourism” (28.34%), then “sun, sea and sand” (19.31%), “food and wine” (14.18%), “urban environment” (13.99%), “leisure and recreation” (11.80%), “sports” (6.25%) and finally “intangible heritage” (2.30%).

Besides, in the case of travel blogs and reviews the order of mentions becomes different. The attraction factor which is mentioned the most is also “tangible heritage” (62.92%), but then comes “urban environment” (26.75%), after that “food and wine” (13.67%), then

“leisure and recreation”, “sun, sea and sand” (11.61‰), “nature and active tourism” (5.68‰) and finally, again, “intangible heritage” (2.26‰).

In both cases “food and wine”, “intangible heritage” and “leisure and recreation” seem to have a similar presence. On the contrary, some differences can be found: whilst for official tourism websites “nature and active tourism” is the second most important theme with a density of 28.34‰, for travel blogs and reviews this attraction factor represents only a fifth of the latter, with a density of only 5.68‰ placed second from the rear. Another important difference can be found in the representation of the urban environment: whilst for travel blogs and reviews “urban environment” is the second most important factor with a density of 26.75‰, for official tourism websites it has about half of the density (13.99‰). Other attraction factors that have significant differences are “tangible heritage” and “sun, sea and sand” which appear remarkably more frequently in the case of official tourism websites.

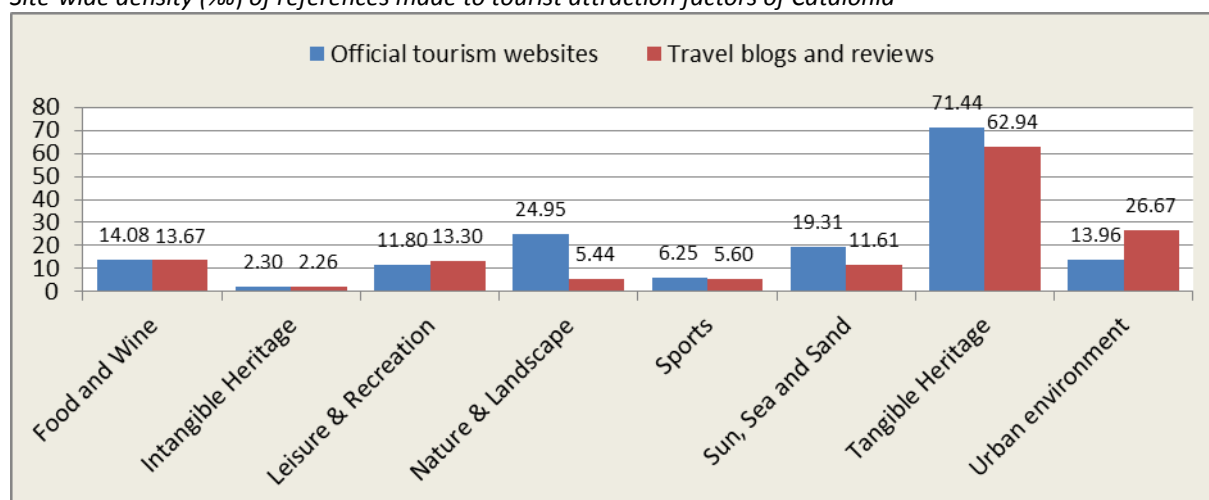
In table 3.24 and figure 3.6, we can appreciate the different attraction factors mentioned about Catalonia, both on official tourism websites and in travel blog and review entries.

Table 3.24
References to tourist attraction factors of Catalonia

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
1. Food and Wine	13,715	14.18‰	7.30	38,167	13.67‰	7.23
2. Intangible Heritage	2,226	2.30‰	6.29	6,303	2.26‰	14.98
3. Leisure and Recreation	11,408	11.80‰	10.25	37,133	13.30‰	15.26
4. Nature and active tourism	27,402	28.34‰	6.37	15,847	5.68‰	11.34
5. Sports	6,082	6.29‰	7.54	15,264	5.47‰	17.82
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	18,667	19.31‰	13.77	32,406	11.61‰	12.41
7. Tangible Heritage	69,133	71.50‰	7.69	175,669	62.92‰	22.33
→ (of which) Gaudí	2,025	2.09‰	8.33	54,648	19.57‰	32.19
8. Urban environment	13,523	13.99‰	6.90	74,675	26.75‰	17.34

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

Figure 3.6
Site-wide density (‰) of references made to tourist attraction factors of Catalonia



Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

Concerning the subject of **tangible heritage**, at first sight it seems that in both cases this attraction factor is importantly present with 71.50% in the case of official tourism websites and a 62.92% in the case of travel blogs and reviews. The presence of tangible heritage in travel blogs and reviews is at first sight slightly lower than on official tourism websites. However, this category needs further analysis. The tangible heritage attraction factor is especially interesting because of its content. Hence, we will exceptionally explain part of its content in this first general overview due to the crucial importance it has to understanding the data. As we spotted from the very beginning, the subject of Gaudí has a privileged position within the travel blogs and reviews image. Gaudí and his masterworks are counted as part of the tangible heritage category.

As appreciated in Table 3.25, the surprise comes when the subject “Gaudí” is separated from the rest of the tangible heritage category. Whilst for official tourism websites the Gaudí subject represents only 2.09% and the remaining tangible heritage has a site-wide density of 69.41%, for travel blogs and reviews the subject of “Gaudí” alone represents 19.57% of the total density and the remaining tangible heritage representation (without Gaudí) now drops to 43.34%. Thus, while for official tourism websites if Gaudí were to become a separate category this would be the last one in presence, but in the case of travel blogs and reviews it would become the third major category in density. Hence, the nature of the image within these same categories is very different between official websites and travel blogs and reviews. In the case of travel blogs and reviews the tangible heritage mentioned is highly concentrated only in the subject of Gaudí.

Table 3.25
Gaudí subject within tangible heritage

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
Tangible Heritage	69,133	71.51%	7.69	175,669	62.92%	22.33
→ <i>Gaudí</i>	2025	2.09%	8.33	54,648	19.57%	32.19
→ <i>Remaining Tang. Heritage</i>	67,108	69.41%	7.66	120,998	43.34%	17.87

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

In relation to the latter, we must clarify that although some attraction factors (such as “tangible heritage”, “food and wine” and “intangible heritage”) may seem to have a similar quantitative representation in terms of density both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews, in fact, the information contained in either case may be very different in nature or qualitatively (in terms of what is mentioned and its identity), as just demonstrated by the case of tangible heritage and Gaudí. The qualitative difference between the content of official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews could be the general rule. This means that, as general categories comprise many different words related to certain attraction factors, for example, bloggers could be mentioning to a great extent global “fast food” or known Spanish food such as “tapas” or “paella” and in contrast official tourism websites could be mentioning a lot of traditional Catalan dishes. The same occurs with the intangible heritage mentioned in terms of its potentially different cultural identity background and the rest of attraction factors in terms of exactly what is mentioned. Therefore, the above eight categories were divided into more specific categories (to see better exactly what is mentioned) and the categories of “food and wine” and “intangible heritage” were further explored in terms of cultural identity background, especially in sections 3.2.1.4.2 and 3.2.1.4.3.

3.2.1.2.2. Specific attraction factors with reference to the total databases

Most of the general categories (except for “intangible heritage” and “sun, sea, sand”) have been subdivided into smaller subcategories. In total we used 31 categories for attraction factors in detail. Table 3.26 shows in more detail the content of the eight general categories with their corresponding 31 sub-categories or specific categories.

Table 3.26
References to tourist attraction factors of Catalonia in detail

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
1.1 Food and Drinks	10,554	10.92‰	7.45	33,162	11.88‰	6.80
1.2 Wine	3,161	3.27‰	6.85	5,005	1.79‰	10.11
2. Intangible heritage	2,226	2.30‰	6.29	6,303	2.26‰	14.98
3.1 Nightlife & partying	2,424	2.51‰	6.04	18,667	6.69‰	12.19
3.2 Theme Parks	550	0.57‰	10.36	4,366	1.56‰	34.37
3.3 Wellness	2,126	2.20‰	6.87	3,851	1.38‰	15.54
3.4 Theatre/spectacle/cinema/music	5,528	5.72‰	14.11	9,258	3.32‰	12.76
3.5 Leisure remaining words	780	0.81‰	5.06	991	0.35‰	11.24
4.1 Nature elements and places	16,945	17.53‰	6.28	10,133	3.63‰	12.08
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	3,069	3.17‰	7.78	2,673	0.95‰	11.60
4.3 Rural landscape	1,916	1.98‰	6.92	580	0.21‰	6.55
4.4 Nature remaining words	5,472	5.66‰	5.58	2,461	0.88‰	9.63
5.1 FC Barcelona	118	0.12‰	9.41	4,362	1.56‰	27.51
5.2 Sporting events/watching	999	1.03‰	4.06	9,523	3.41‰	13.52
5.3 Other sports	4,965	5.14‰	8.44	1,125	0.40‰	15.18
6. Sun, Sea, Sand + nautical	18,667	19.31‰	13.77	32,406	11.61‰	12.41
7.1 Buildings and architecture	10,177	10.53‰	3.58	29,412	10.54‰	13.75
7.2 Gaudí	2,025	2.09‰	8.33	54,648	19.57‰	32.19
7.3 Artists	3,920	4.05‰	7.26	9,190	3.29‰	23.72
7.4 Art, design, art styles	13,436	13.90‰	5.40	17,523	6.28‰	13.04
7.5 Museums	7,095	7.34‰	12.26	12,264	4.39‰	25.65
7.6 Archaeological sites	2,453	2.54‰	9.76	3,167	1.13‰	13.41
7.7 History/industrial	6,568	6.79‰	8.27	5,037	1.80‰	7.19
7.8 Military/castles	5,140	5.32‰	8.57	9,202	3.30‰	19.66
7.9 Monuments/sculptures	1,768	1.83‰	9.78	8,108	2.90‰	19.32
7.10 Religious heritage	11,345	11.73‰	7.05	24,497	8.77‰	22.75
7.11 Culture remaining words	5,206	5.38‰	13.60	2,621	0.94‰	9.14
8.1 Shopping	1,628	1.68‰	4.86	12,230	4.38‰	8.15
8.2 Barcelona attractions	2,812	2.91‰	7.60	30,685	10.99‰	23.66
8.3 Other city attractions	316	0.33‰	3.01	612	0.22‰	22.58
8.4 Urban tourism/general sites	8,767	9.07‰	7.20	31,148	11.16‰	14.62

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

1. Food and wine: This category was divided into two subcategories. Regarding the first, 1.1 “food and drinks”, we can say that the site-wide density in both official tourism websites (10.92‰) and travel blogs and reviews (11.88‰) is similar. Despite this similarity, we still cannot know exactly whether traditional Catalan food and drinks are the most mentioned of other types of food and drinks in either case. However, in the case of the “wine” category (which includes words such as wine, winery, oenology and cava), we can see that it is much more present in the case of official tourism websites (3.27‰) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (1.79‰). The specific category of “wine” is mentioned in official tourism

websites almost twice as much as in travel blogs and reviews. Wine and wine culture are considered to be an attractive and singular feature of the Catalan territory.

2. Intangible heritage: This category was not subdivided here. For more in-depth analysis, see the cultural identity section 3.2.1.4.2.

3. Leisure and recreation: This category was divided into five different subcategories. Although all the subcategories could be defined as leisure activities, these groups are particularly different in nature.

Among these categories we observe that 3.1 “nightlife and partying” is particularly present in the case of travel blogs and reviews (6.69‰) with this type of leisure being the one most popular among them. Conversely, this category has 2.51‰ in the case of official tourism websites. Regarding 3.2 “theme parks” data show that this type of leisure is three times more mentioned among travel blogs and reviews (1.56‰) than on official tourism websites (0.57‰). Conversely, the case of 3.3 “wellness” is more present within official tourism website texts (2.20‰) than in travel blogs and reviews (1.38‰). Factor 3.4, “theatre/spectacles/cinema/music”, is also denser in the case of official websites (5.72‰) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (3.32‰). This leisure type is the most strongly promoted and present within official tourism websites, at a considerable distance from the other types of leisure. Regarding 3.5, “leisure remaining words”, it is more present in the case of official tourism websites (0.81‰) than in travel blogs (0.35‰).

4. Nature and active tourism: This category was divided into four sub-groups of categories. At first sight it is remarkable that all of these sub-categories are denser in official tourism website texts, meaning that this attraction factor is considerably more important or at least mentioned by official image. The first, 4.1 “nature elements and places”, has a very high density in the case of official tourism websites (17.53‰) and this subcategory is the most mentioned. However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews these “nature elements and places” have a density of only 3.63‰. 4.2 “nature sports and active tourism” is about three times more present in the case of official websites (3.39‰) than in travel blogs and reviews (1.05‰). 4.4, “rural landscape”, is also a remarkable case since on official tourism websites it has a density of 1.98‰, which is low, but at least present, whilst in the case of travel blogs and reviews it is almost inexistent, with a density of 0.21‰. This shows that “rural landscape” is ten times more present in the case of official tourism websites while it is almost forgotten by bloggers’ posts. A similar case occurs with 4.4, “nature remaining words”, which is significantly present within official tourism websites (5.66‰) whilst in the case of travel blogs and reviews the remaining words about nature have only a presence of 0.88‰.

5. Sports: This category was subdivided into 3 sub-categories. It must be noted that nature sports and active tourism activities have not been placed within the sports category but within the nature category. The sports category includes FC Barcelona, sporting events and other sports (such as snow sports and golf). In this case, although the general sports category seemed to have a similar presence in both travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites, if we look at what is exactly said about sports in both texts, we see it differs considerably. In the first place we see that 5.1 “FC Barcelona” is practically not

mentioned by official tourism websites (0.12‰) whilst for travel blogs and reviews it is about 12 times denser and has a very high weight (27.51). In this sense it is remarkable that within travel blogs and reviews 1.56 words every 1000 refer to FCBarcelona and that when this factor is mentioned it is placed in predominant positions such as in the title. FC Barcelona can therefore be considered a very important symbol and attraction factor of Catalonia for some of the bloggers. Regarding 5.2 “sporting events/watching” we can see that it is also in the case of travel blogs and reviews that it has a major density (3.41‰). In the case of official tourism websites, 5.2 has a presence of 1.03‰. This means that for travel blogs and reviews, sporting events and watching sports in general is a much more important attraction factor of Catalonia if compared to that of official tourism websites. However, in the case of 5.3 “other sports” which include golf and snow sports, it is the official tourism websites that promote it very strongly (5.14‰) whilst bloggers practically do not mention it (0.40‰).

6. The sun, sea and sand category, which also includes nautical tourism, was not subdivided into smaller categories.

7. Tangible culture: This category was subdivided into eleven subgroups. Regarding 7.1 “buildings and architecture”, we can observe that it is an important subcategory for both official tourism websites (10.53‰) and for travel blogs and reviews (10.54‰). In fact it is mentioned almost the same in both groups of files. However, as we explained before, 7.2 “Gaudí” and his masterpieces (which are highly related to “buildings and architecture” words, are extraordinarily dense in the case of travel blogs and reviews (19.57‰) which probably means that many of the words bloggers mention about “buildings and architecture” might be related to Gaudí’s masterpieces and not to other buildings and architecture. Probably in the case of official tourism websites the “buildings and architecture” words mentioned are much more diverse than in the case of travel blogs and reviews. Regarding 7.3 “artists” (other Catalan artists such as Dalí, Miró or Pau Casals), they are similarly mentioned on both official tourism websites (4.05‰) and in travel blogs and reviews (3.29‰). The subcategory of “art, design and art styles” is very dense in the case of official tourism websites (13.90‰), in which case it is the densest subcategory within tangible heritage. However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews “art, design and art styles”-related words are mentioned about half the number of times (6.28‰).

7.5 “museums” are also more mentioned in the case of official tourism websites (7.34‰) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (4.39‰). Probably, official image promotes the museums more than bloggers actually mention them in their writings, however the weight of “museums” in travel blogs is high (25.65) meaning that for some bloggers these are very important attraction factors. 7.6 “archaeological sites” as an attraction factor are also more mentioned on official tourism websites (2.54‰) than in travel blogs and reviews (1.13‰). 7.7 The case of “history/industrial” heritage is much more mentioned in the case of official tourism websites (6.79‰) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (1.80‰) probably indicating that bloggers are not so interested or simply do not think it is worth mentioning it. Regarding 7.8, the “Military/castles” category, in both cases it is shown that it is more present on official websites (5.32) than in travel blogs (3.30‰). 7.9 “Monuments and sculptures”-related words however, seem to be denser in the case of travel blogs (2.90‰) than in official websites (1.83‰). 7.10 “religious heritage” is an interesting case, as for both groups of files it is a remarkably dense attraction factor, with 11.73‰ in the case of official

tourism websites and 8.77‰ in the case of travel blogs. In this sense, religion-related heritage seems to be an important cultural attraction factor for Catalonia slightly more prominent in websites. Regarding 7.11, “culture remaining words”, we observe that other words related to culture in general are quite present on official tourism websites (5.38‰) but contrastingly are much less mentioned in travel blogs and reviews (0.94‰).

8. Urban tourism: This category is divided into 4 subcategories. The first, 8.1 “shopping”, is much more present in the case of travel blogs and reviews (4.38‰) than on official tourism websites (1.68‰). As shown, bloggers value “shopping” more as an attraction factor of Catalonia than an official image. 8.2 “Barcelona attractions” includes specific places of Barcelona city, the words related to this attraction factor are much more present in the case of travel blogs and reviews (10.99‰) than in the case of official tourism websites (2.91‰). This result might be explained because most of the blogs are about Barcelona and Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, therefore we could assume that urban elements of this city would appear more often in the case of bloggers. Regarding official tourism websites, the fact that places in Barcelona are not so mentioned could be explained because official image promotes all the territories in a more balanced way. 8.3 “other city attractions” are not mentioned very often in either case. 8.4 “urban tourism/general sites” are mentioned considerably in both cases with 9.07‰ in the case of official tourism websites, and 11.16‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews, this latter category being the most mentioned for both types of files within the urban tourism category.

3.2.1.2.3. Attraction factors presence per files

In the case of official tourism websites, results in Table 3.27 show that the group of attraction factors with a major average presence per document is “tangible heritage” (22.13), which means that within each file 22 words related to tangible heritage can be found. This category has an extraordinarily high standard deviation (101.28) which means that the distribution of the tangible heritage elements is highly irregular, in many of the files its presence is low or non-existent while in many others its presence is very high, explaining such a high deviation. Of this tangible heritage category, “art, design and art styles” (4.3) and “religious heritage” (3.63) are the subcategories with the highest average presence. Then, at some distance, comes the “nature and active tourism” (8.77) category, which also has a high standard deviation (38.78), also indicative of an irregular presence of this category, with many documents with a low, but some with very high presence. Then comes the “sun, sea and sand” category (5.98) meaning that in each document almost six words refer to sun, sea and sand elements. Next comes the “food and wine” (4.39) and the “urban environment” (4.33) categories, which have similar average mentions. The “food and wine” category has a very high standard deviation in proportion (27.15) which means it is very irregularly distributed: some files have no mentions of it and others have high numbers of mentions. Finally, the three categories with a lower average presence are “leisure and recreational activities” (3.65) and “sports” (1.95), of which the most prominent subcategory is “other sports”, and “intangible heritage” (0.71). It is surprising that the official websites do not give more emphasis to the intangible heritage of Catalonia, which is so related to the Catalan cultural identity. The order followed by the categories and their averages is similar to that shown by the word counts and site-wide densities. Especially the “sports” category has a very high standard deviation in proportion (14.50), which is about seven times the mean.

Table 3.27
Descriptive statistics of attraction factors per files

Attraction Factor	Official tourism websites (44,295 u.w.)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 u.w.)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
1. Food and Wine	13,715	4.39	27.15	736.95	38,167	1.51	4.46	19.88
1.1 Food and Drinks	10,554	3.38	20.12	404.84	33,162	1.31	3.83	14.69
1.2 Wine	3,161	1.01	8.68	75.27	5,005	0.2	1.75	3.06
2. Intangible Heritage	2,226	0.71	4.38	19.20	6,303	0.25	1.44	2.07
3. Leisure and recreational activities	11,408	3.65	19.70	387.91	37,133	1.46	3.64	13.25
3.1 Nightlife & partying	2,424	0.78	5.00	25.01	18,667	0.74	2.29	5.24
3.2 Theme Parks	550	0.18	1.49	2.23	4,366	0.17	1.01	1.03
3.3 Wellness	2,126	0.68	7.61	57.85	3,851	0.15	1.70	2.90
3.4 Theatres/spectacles/cinemas/music	5,528	1.77	12.01	144.33	9,258	0.37	1.30	1.69
3.5 Leisure remaining words	780	0.25	1.56	2.43	991	0.04	0.45	0.20
4. Nature and active tourism	27,402	8.77	38.78	1,503.81	15,847	0.62	1.92	3.67
4.1 Nature elements and places	16,945	5.42	24.05	578.53	10,133	0.40	1.44	2.08
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	3,069	0.98	9.13	83.32	2,673	0.11	0.57	0.33
4.3 Rural landscape	1,916	0.61	2.95	8.69	580	0.02	0.22	0.05
4.4 Nature remaining words	5,472	1.75	7.43	55.19	2,461	0.1	0.45	0.20
5. Sports	6,082	1.95	14.50	210.14	15,264	0.6	2.81	7.87
5.1 FC Barcelona	118	0.04	0.41	0.17	4,362	0.17	1.42	2.00
5.2 Sporting events/watching	999	0.32	2.06	4.26	9,523	0.38	1.78	3.16
5.3 Other sports	4,965	1.59	13.34	178.00	1,379	0.05	0.38	0.14
6. Sun, Sea, Sand	18,667	5.98	25.09	629.48	32,406	1.28	3.38	11.44
7. Tangible Heritage	69,133	22.13	101.28	10257.91	175,669	6.93	13.75	188.99
7.1 Buildings and architecture	10,177	3.26	18.08	326.88	29,413	1.16	3.19	10.15
7.2 Gaudí	2,025	0.65	4.56	20.79	54,648	2.16	6.40	40.92
7.3 Artists	3,920	1.25	7.99	63.82	9,190	0.36	1.66	2.76
7.4 Art, design, art styles	13,436	4.30	22.69	514.84	17,523	0.69	2.19	4.78
7.5 Museums	7,095	2.27	10.89	118.53	12,264	0.48	1.78	3.18
7.6 Archaeological sites	2,453	0.79	3.50	12.25	3,167	0.12	0.82	0.67
7.7 History/industrial	6,568	2.10	8.10	65.56	5,037	0.20	0.71	0.51
7.8 Military/castles	5,140	1.65	8.05	64.78	9,202	0.36	1.65	2.74
7.9 Monuments/sculptures	1,768	0.57	3.11	9.67	8,108	0.32	1.39	1.93
7.10 Religious heritage	11,345	3.63	22.09	488.03	24,497	0.97	2.91	8.48
7.11 Culture remaining words	5,206	1.67	8.24	67.90	2,621	0.10	0.46	0.21
8. Urban Environment	13,523	4.33	19.49	379.74	74,675	2.94	5.62	31.55
8.1 Shopping	1,628	0.52	3.75	14.06	12,230	0.48	1.36	1.85
8.2 Barcelona attractions	2,812	0.90	5.32	28.32	30,685	1.21	3.00	9.02
8.3 Other city attractions	316	0.10	0.75	0.56	612	0.02	0.37	0.14
8.4 Urban tourism/general sites	8,767	2.81	11.64	135.57	31,148	1.23	2.98	8.87

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

In general, we see that in the case of official tourism websites, the standard deviation from the mean is quite high, meaning that the distribution of the different categories among the files is not homogeneous. In general, we observe that a majority of the files have low concentrations of the categories while some others have a very high presence of the elements within the categories.

Regarding travel blogs and reviews, as seen in Table 3.27, the means are in general lower, as files, in this case entries, are usually also shorter. The highest mean of all attraction factors is also held by “tangible heritage” (6.93), meaning that in each blog or review entry almost 7 words refer to tangible heritage elements, and it is remarkable that within them only the “Gaudí” subject has a mean of 2.16 appearances per entry. In this case the standard deviation is just about double the mean, implying that the tangible heritage elements in general and Gaudí elements are considerably regularly mentioned among the different entries, as their variation among files is not very high. The second factor most mentioned attraction by bloggers is “urban environment” with mean of 2.94 times per blog or review entry. Within it “Barcelona attractions” (1.21) are especially prominent. Again, the standard deviation is less than double the mean high, meaning these elements are quite regularly spread among entries. After that comes the “food and wine” category with a mean of 1.51 and a standard deviation about three times higher (4.46) meaning this attraction factor is not as regularly spread as tangible heritage is. In fourth place comes “leisure and recreational activities” 1.46, which has a standard deviation of about double, meaning this element is quite regularly spread among the entries. Then comes the “sun, sea and sand” category with a mean of 1.28, “nature and active tourism” (0.62), “sports” (0.6) and “intangible heritage” (0.25).

The main differences can be found in that although the mean of appearances of tangible heritage on official tourism websites is much higher than in travel blogs and reviews, the Gaudí subject is far less mentioned on official tourism websites than in travel blogs and reviews. Another remarkable difference is that although in the case of official tourism websites the subcategory of “food and drinks” and “wine” had a proportion of appearances of 3 to 1 in this order, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, the “wine” subcategory has a very low mean (0.2) if compared to “food and wine” (1.31). Therefore, for bloggers the wine element is not so important to mention. It should also be noted that leisure and recreational activities have a much higher standard deviation in the case of official tourism websites if compared to travel blogs and reviews. This means that for bloggers the recreational activities are present regularly among their entries whilst on official tourism websites these are very irregularly mentioned. Intangible heritage has the lowest means in both cases and relatively high standard deviations meaning that not only is this attraction factor little mentioned but it is irregularly mentioned.

3.2.1.2.4. Correlations between attraction factors

Regarding the eight general attraction factor categories, and also their subcategories, we observe that official tourism websites in general show stronger correlations than travel blogs and reviews.

Regarding the eight general attraction factor categories in the case of **official tourism websites** (Table 3.28) we observe that the strongest correlation is between 7. “Tangible heritage” and 8. “Urban environment” (0.749). This strong relationship can be expected as usually tangible heritage sites are located in urban areas, and both types of attraction elements are often linked, promoted and consumed together. The second strongest correlation is between 3. “Leisure and recreation” and 2. “Intangible heritage” (0.630). This is significant as, although intangible heritage is very little mentioned, when it is, it seems to be along with leisure and recreation activities. Then comes a strong relationship between 6. “Sun, sea and sand” and 4. “Nature and active tourism” (0.598), it can be seen that official tourism documents promote the sun and the beach as a natural area and link it to other nature features and active tourism. 3. “Leisure and recreational activities” is strongly related to 8. “Urban environment”. This can be explained because urban spaces have a great offer of leisure activities, and texts speak about their leisure experiences and possibilities.

It is also remarkable that 4. “Nature and active tourism” has a strong correlation with 5. “Sports” (0.558), which can be explained because both categories are related to sports and physical activities, and many sports are done in nature. Moreover, category 5. “Sports” is also correlated to 6. “Sun, sea and sand” (0.546) meaning that the coastal areas are also related to the practice of different sports. In general we can see that on official tourism websites 6. “Sun, sea and sand”, 4. “Nature and active tourism” and 5. “Sports” attractions factors are strongly correlated to one another.

Another strong correlation is that of 2. “Intangible heritage” to “tangible heritage”. Both types of heritage seem to be correlated and to appear together as they are inseparable parts of culture. Although intangible heritage is much less present than tangible heritage, when it is, it is correlated to tangible heritage. Some other strong correlations are that of 7. “Tangible heritage” with 3. “Leisure and recreational activities”, which shows that leisure and heritage visiting are compatible and complementary and explained together. Category 7. “Tangible heritage” is also correlated to 4. “Nature and active tourism” (0.527) showing that although these categories may seem contradictory they are in fact explained and promoted together probably as complementary to one another. Another strong correlation is that of 3. “Leisure and recreational activities” and “sports”, both attraction factors are related to leisure and physical activities.

If we look into the attraction factor categories in more detail, that is to say breaking them down into the specific subcategories, we observe in the first place that usually subcategories have very strong correlations to their main stem category (see Annex C, Table C.1.). For example, we observe that the subcategory 1.1 “food and drinks” has a correlation of 0.98 to its stem category 1. “Food and wine”. These strong correlations are expected due to the fact that stem categories are formed by their subcategories. The correlations among the stem categories and their subcategories usually oscillate between 0.50 and 0.99. The only correlation between stem category and subcategory which is considerably weaker than the rest is that of 5. “Sports” with 5.1 “FCBarcelona” (0.31). This probably means that although FCBarcelona is placed within sports it is not necessarily related to other types of sports and sporting events by official websites.

Among subcategories that do not belong to the same stem attraction factor, we also observe some strong correlations both with general categories and other subcategories. We see that 1. "Food and wine" and 1.1 "Food and drinks" have strong correlations with 4.3 "Rural landscape" (0.59) and (0.58) respectively. This is significant as rural landscape is not mentioned very often but when it is, it seems to be mentioned along with food and drinks (probably associated to traditional and rustic cooking, with quality local farming and agricultural products, which could explain such a correlation). Another strong relationship is that of 1. "Food" and 1.1 "food and drinks" with 8.1 "shopping" (0.56 and 0.54 respectively). This means that within official tourism websites, files promote the relationship of buying food and drink products and also the relationship between shopping around the city and eating in restaurants, cafés, etc.

Also strong is the relationship between 2. "Intangible heritage" and 3.4 "Theatre/spectacle/cinema/music" (0.65). Such a strong relationship is expected as intangible heritage traditions, events, etc. are strongly related to spectacles and music in general. It is therefore remarkable that official tourism websites promote spectacles and music along with intangible heritage. 2. "Intangible heritage" is also strongly correlated to 7.7 "History and industrial" (heritage). This could be due to the fact that intangible heritage has historic roots in the territory and that when intangible heritage is explained, historical facts are also mentioned and explained.

Remarkably, 3. "Leisure and recreation" is related very strongly to some subcategories in 7. "Tangible heritage". These are 7.7 "history/industrial" (0.60) and 7.11 "culture remaining words" (0.68). The joint appearance of leisure, history and culture remaining words may mean that many of the leisure activities are related to history and culture in general, or that both types of activities (leisure and cultural) are promoted together. Category 3.4 "theatres/spectacles/cinema/music" has a strong correlation with 7.11 "culture remaining words". This can be explained because the elements within 3.4, although classified as leisure are part of culture too and hence is reflected in the files. Category 3.5 "Leisure remaining words" is strongly correlated to 4.4 "nature remaining words" (0.73) and to 7.11 "culture remaining words" (0.72). Category 4.4 "nature remaining words" is also strongly correlated to 7.11 "culture remaining words" (0.69). This means that words in general about leisure, nature and culture appear very often together. This can be explained because official tourism websites often stress the qualities and attraction factors of the destinations with an introduction (e.g. Catalonia has a diverse culture, lots of leisure offer and many nature places to go...). Category 3.4 "Leisure remaining words" is strongly correlated to attraction factor 6. "Sun, sea and sand" (0.74) implying that the sun, sea and sand attraction factor and tourism activity are strongly related to leisure, as leisure activities are performed in the coastal areas. We also observe that 8.4 "Urban tourism/general sites" is strongly related to 7. "Tangible heritage" (0.77) and many subcategories within it, such as 7.1 "Buildings and architecture" (0.75), 7.4 "Art, design, art styles" (0.73), 7.7 "History/industrial" (0.78) and 7.9 "Monuments/sculptures" (0.73). These strong correlations can be explained because urban spaces and tangible heritage are explained together, most heritage is placed in cities, especially buildings and architecture but also elements of art design and art styles, historic or industrial sites and monuments and sculptures.

Regarding the eight major categories the **travel blogs and reviews** (table 3.29) the strongest correlation is, as well as on official tourism websites, between 7. “Tangible heritage” and “urban environment” (0.475). Again, this is explained because tangible heritage is located mainly in urban spaces, and urban tourism consists partly of visiting heritage too. Then comes another strong correlation between 1. “Food and wine” and 8. “Urban environment” (0.396). This may be explained because most bloggers write about Barcelona, which is an eminently urban place, and once they are there, they very often mention food and wine elements, meaning both attraction factors are attached. Two other strong correlations are between 1. “Food and wine” and “sun, sea, sand” (0.334), meaning that tourists who do sun and sea tourism also talk a lot about food and wine; and 3. “Leisure and recreation activities” (0.331).

Attraction factor 6. “Sun, sea, sand” is also correlated to 8. “Urban environment”. This could mean that tourists combine sun and sea tourism with visits to urban areas such as Barcelona. It could also mean they describe urban elements or their coastal destinations. Again, as in the case of official tourism websites, we observe a relatively strong correlation between 4. “Nature and active tourism” and 7. “Tangible heritage”. This means that bloggers also see these two attraction factors as complementary. A similar thing happens with the correlation of 6. “Sun, sea and sand” and 7. “Tangible heritage” (0.295). Bloggers see these two different attraction factors as complementary, showing the type of tourist attractions bloggers are visiting.

If we look at the attraction factor categories present in travel blogs and reviews in more detail, that is to say, breaking them down into 31 subcategories, we observe in the first place that usually subcategories have strong correlations to their general stem category (see Annex C, Table C.1.). However, in this case, correlations are more irregular and not as strong as in the case of official tourism websites. For example, a very strong relationship is found between 1. “Food and wine” and 1.1. “Food and drinks”. Also strong is the relationship of 3. “Leisure” with 3.1 “Nightlife and partying” (0.74), between 4. “Nature and active tourism” and 4.1 “nature elements and places” (0.92). In this case, quite unlike from official tourism websites, category 5. “Sports” is most strongly correlated to 5.2 “FC Barcelona” (0.88), meaning that FC Barcelona and sports are closely related and explained within blogs. Then, very significantly we observe that category 7. “Tangible heritage” is most strongly correlated to 7.1 “buildings and architecture” and to 7.2 “Gaudí” (0.77), two closely related subcategories. This probably means that for bloggers and reviewers the tangible heritage revolves around these two elements. Finally, 8. “Urban environment” is strongly correlated to both 8.2 “Barcelona attractions” (0.80) and 8.3 “Other city attractions” (0.81). This entails that when urban environment is mentioned, both attractions in Barcelona city and attractions in other cities are also mentioned.

Among subcategories that do not belong to the same stem attraction factor, we observe some strong correlations also, both with stem categories and other subcategories. It can be observed that, similarly to official tourism websites, a strong correlation exists between 1.1 “food and drinks” and 8.1 “shopping” (0.37) and “other city attractions”. This probably means that bloggers combine shopping with eating out in restaurants, cafés, etc. and also that they may buy food products and drinks They especially talk about food and drinks when

also talking about attractions in towns other than Barcelona. Besides, in the case of travel blogs and reviews the wine product has very few correlations with other subcategories.

Category 2. “Intangible heritage”, is most strongly correlated to 3.4 “Theatre/spectacle/cinema/music” (0.32). This correlation can be explained because much of the intangible heritage is performed in spectacles or consists of music, which shows that both subcategories are linked and that tourists who talk about intangible heritage are also interested in the theatre, spectacle and music culture. It is quite remarkable that in the case of bloggers, 3.1 “nightlife and partying” is most strongly correlated to 6. “Sun, sea and sand” (0.26) tourism and elements. This means that bloggers who write about the sun and the beach also do so about partying and nightlife, which shows the type of coastal tourism performed is associated with nightlife. Category 3.4 “Theatre/spectacle/cinema/music” is most strongly correlated to 7. “Tangible heritage” (0.26) and 8. “Urban environment” (0.27). These two relationships can be explained because theatres, spectacles, cinema and music are what we could call “cultural leisure” and hence people who do these activities seem to be also interested in the tangible heritage type of culture. Moreover, these cultural leisure activities are usually undertaken in urban spaces.

It is notable that 4. “Nature and active tourism” is strongly correlated to 7.10 “religious heritage” (0.30) and 8.3 “other city attractions” (0.29). This could mean that nature, religious heritage and other towns’ attractions are bound together, and that the embodiment of this union of attraction factors could be Montserrat. Category 4.1 “nature elements and places” reinforces this union of factors as it is strongly correlated to 7.10 “religious heritage” (0.28) and 8.3 “other city attractions”(0.26). Besides, 4.1 “nature elements and places” is also strongly related to “sun, sea and sand” (0.26), meaning that bloggers also associate both factors. The union of both elements could point to the Costa Brava brand (the “wild coast” as translated into English).

We observe that 7. “Tangible heritage” is strongly related to 8.2 “Barcelona attractions” (0.33) and 8.3 “other city attractions”. This means that urban attractions are mentioned along with tangible heritage sites both in Barcelona and other towns.

Table 3.28
Correlations among eight general attraction factors (Official tourism websites)

Attraction factors	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Food and Wine	1.000	0.440	0.369	0.361	0.205	0.286	0.278	0.479
2. Intangible Heritage	0.440	1.000	0.630	0.428	0.204	0.360	0.554	0.483
3. Leisure & recreation	0.369	0.630	1.000	0.467	0.505	0.540	0.538	0.573
4. Nature & active tourism	0.361	0.428	0.467	1.000	0.558	0.598	0.527	0.490
5. Sports	0.205	0.204	0.505	0.558	1.000	0.546	0.282	0.338
6. Sun, Sea & Sand	0.286	0.360	0.540	0.598	0.546	1.000	0.428	0.488
7. Tangible Heritage	0.278	0.554	0.538	0.527	0.282	0.428	1.000	0.749
8. Urban Environment	0.479	0.483	0.573	0.490	0.338	0.488	0.749	1.000

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). (Highest correlations in bold).

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) files in English

Table 3.29
Correlations among eight major attraction factors (travel blogs and reviews)

Attraction factors	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Food and Wine	1.000	0.169	0.331	0.249	0.129	0.334	0.290	0.396
2. Intangible Heritage	0.169	1.000	0.244	0.146	0.053	0.176	0.170	0.193
3. Leisure & recreation	0.331	0.244	1.000	0.180	0.179	0.284	0.223	0.284
4. Nature & active tourism	0.249	0.146	0.180	1.000	0.079	0.281	0.310	0.267
5. Sports	0.129	0.053	0.179	0.079	1.000	0.134	0.141	0.146
6. Sun, Sea & Sand	0.334	0.176	0.284	0.281	0.134	1.000	0.295	0.331
7. Tangible Heritage	0.290	0.170	0.223	0.310	0.141	0.295	1.000	0.475
8. Urban Environment	0.396	0.193	0.284	0.267	0.146	0.331	0.475	1.000

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). (Highest correlations in bold).

Database: 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

For the correlations for the specific attraction factors, see Annex C, Table C.1. Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (Official tourism websites) and Annex C, Table C.4. Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (travel blogs and reviews).

3.2.1.3. Feelings and dichotomies

These results are based on the categories of feelings and dichotomies. For the summary of final categories used for good feelings, bad feelings and opposite concepts, see Table 2.11.

3.2.1.3.1. Feelings and dichotomies with reference to the total databases

The 10 attributes or adjectives of the dichotomies with the highest density, with which Catalonia is mostly described, are (see table 3.30):

Table 3.30
Ten attributes with a higher density (Catalonia)

Official tourism websites	Travel blogs and reviews
1. Old/Old-fashioned	1. Beautiful
2. Beautiful	2. Fun/Interesting
3. Fun/Interesting	3. Old/Old-fashioned
4. New/Fashionable	4. Love
5. Authentic	5. New/Fashionable
6. Quiet	6. Authentic
7. Lively	7. Full
8. Pleasant	8. Relax
9. Love	9. Cheap
10. Relax	10. Noisy

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

Coinciding adjectives and words were coloured in green and those not coinciding within the top ten were left white. Catalonia, its destinations and tourist experiences are described by both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews as: Beautiful, fun/interesting, at the same time as old (ancient) and new or fashionable, authentic, and they are associated with love and relax. Official tourism websites differ from travel blogs and reviews in that they describe Catalonia as being quiet, lively and pleasant, whilst travel blogs and reviews

emphasize more that places and attractions are full, cheap and noisy. The three different adjectives mentioned by bloggers may have a more negative connotation.

Table 3.31
References to Good and Bad feelings and to dichotomies

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
1 Good feelings	11,144	11.53‰	3.05	105,519	37.80‰	8.52
2 Bad feelings	807	0.83‰	2.59	21,591	7.73‰	5.14
3 Love	573	0.59‰	3.09	6,973	2.50‰	7.15
4 Hate	7	0.01‰	0.00	484	0.17‰	4.98
5 Beautiful	3,754	3.88‰	2.94	16,799	6.02‰	9.93
6 Ugly	6	0.01‰	0.00	341	0.12‰	5.25
7 Pleasant	632	0.65‰	3.40	2,389	0.86‰	5.44
8 Unpleasant	8	0.01‰	0.00	310	0.11‰	5.55
9 Friendly	99	0.10‰	2.22	1,434	0.51‰	4.15
10 Unfriendly	2	0.00‰	0.00	34	0.01‰	8.82
11 Fun/interesting	2,966	3.07‰	4.10	15,885	5.69‰	7.58
12 Boring	33	0.03‰	0.00	1,077	0.39‰	3.51
13 Lively	663	0.69‰	5.58	1,675	0.60‰	6.57
14 Gloomy	89	0.09‰	11.24	469	0.17‰	2.75
15 Noisy	162	0.17‰	0.93	2,467	0.88‰	4.01
16 Quiet	812	0.84‰	1.65	1,835	0.66‰	5.39
17 Full	236	0.24‰	0.30	4,637	1.66‰	5.12
18 Empty	31	0.03‰	0.00	626	0.22‰	4.92
19 Orderly	241	0.25‰	0.12	1,178	0.42‰	3.07
20 Chaotic	101	0.10‰	7.23	805	0.29‰	6.86
21 Clean	164	0.17‰	0.92	1,161	0.42‰	5.00
22 Dirty	84	0.09‰	0.24	1,060	0.38‰	8.93
23 Relax	508	0.53‰	1.30	3,943	1.41‰	4.41
24 Distress	55	0.06‰	0.36	343	0.12‰	2.19
25 Authentic	1,619	1.67‰	2.84	5,703	2.04‰	6.55
26 Inauthentic	15	0.02‰	0.67	647	0.23‰	8.51
27 New/Fashionable	2,296	2.37‰	1.74	5,771	2.07‰	7.79
28 Old/old-fashioned	4,016	4.15‰	5.48	8,059	2.89‰	8.57
29 Cheap	35	0.04‰	0.00	2,485	0.89‰	4.40
30 Expensive	80	0.08‰	5.62	2,043	0.73‰	6.74
31 Modest/poor	480	0.50‰	3.73	1,569	0.56‰	4.47
32 Luxurious/wealthy	418	0.43‰	1.89	759	0.27‰	6.19
33 Safe	414	0.43‰	6.55	779	0.28‰	3.90
34 Unsafe	75	0.08‰	5.87	2,150	0.77‰	7.38

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

As shown in Table 3.31 the different results about dichotomies are as follow:

- 1. Good feelings vs. 2. Bad feelings

In the case of official tourism websites 11.53 out of 1,000 convey good feelings while only 0.83 out of 1,000 refer to bad feelings. The words that are most often mentioned as good feelings on official tourism websites are: great, interesting, good, magnificent and beauty. The most mentioned words related to bad feelings are: death, lost, problems, poor, problem.

In the case of Travel blogs and reviews, the good feelings are more numerous in proportion than on official tourism websites, about 3 times more, and represent 37.80 words of every 1000. The bad feelings are also more common in the case of travel blogs and reviews, in this case 7.73 words every 1000 refer to bad feelings. The words related to good feelings most often mentioned in travel blogs and reviews are: great, good, nice, beautiful and amazing. The bad feelings most mentioned are: bad, crazy, lost, unfortunately, tired.

We can observe that on both the official tourism websites and the travel blogs and reviews, good feelings outnumber bad feelings. However, the proportions in which they do so are different. Whilst in the case of the official tourism websites the words related to good feelings are about 14 times more mentioned, in the case of travel blogs and reviews they are only about 5 times more frequent. Or in other words, bad feelings are mentioned more often in the case of travel blogs and reviews. This can be explained because, as expected, official sites do not convey bad feelings which could harm the image tourists get of the destination, and often lack self-critique. Besides, it is normal that bloggers who have already had the experience will evaluate certain aspects of it including the negative ones or the ones that have caused them bad feelings.

- 3. Love vs. 4. Hate

In the case of official tourism websites, “love”-related words represent 0.59‰ and hate related words are very infrequent (0.01‰). Besides, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, “love”-related words represent 2.50‰ and “hate”-related words only 0.17‰. In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “love” are: love, admire, romantic, admired. The most frequent words related to “hate” are: infamous and hate. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “love”-related words are: love, loved, liked, in love with. The most frequent “hate”-related words are: hate, infamous, hated and dislike.

In both cases the words related to “love” are more frequent than “hate”-related words. However, in both cases words related to “love” and to “hate” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. “Love”-related words are about 5 times more frequent in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Remarkably, “hate”-related words, although low in both cases, are about 17 times more frequent in travel blogs and reviews. Again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “hate” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “hate”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 5. Beautiful vs. 6. Ugly

In the case of official tourism websites “beautiful”-related words represent 3.88‰ of the total and words related to “ugly” are very infrequent, almost inexistent, representing only 0.01‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “beautiful” are slightly more frequent in proportion (6.02‰), and words related to “ugly” score only 0.12‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “beautiful” are: magnificent, beauty, beautiful, spectacular. The most frequent word related to “ugly” is: evil. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “beautiful”-related words are: beautiful, wonderful, lovely, and gorgeous. The most frequent “ugly”-related words are: nasty, evil, obnoxious and offensive.

In both cases the words related to “beautiful” are more frequent than words related to “ugly”. However, both words related to “beautiful” and to “ugly” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, “ugly”-related words, although low in both cases, are about 12 times more frequent in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “ugly” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Again, this can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “ugly”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 7. Pleasant vs. 8. Unpleasant

In general we can see that words related to “pleasant” and “unpleasant” are not very used in either types of texts.

In the case of official tourism websites, “pleasant”-related words represent 0.65‰ of the total and words related to “unpleasant” are very infrequent, almost inexistent, representing only 0.01‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “pleasant” are just slightly more frequent in comparison, 0.86‰, and words related to “ugly” only 0.11‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “pleasant” are: pleasant, delicious, delightful and gentle. The most frequent word related to “unpleasant” are: sulphurous and repellent. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “pleasant”-related words are: delicious, pleasant, appropriate, pleasantly. The most frequent “unpleasant”-related words are: disgusting, wicked, embarrassing, painful.

In both cases, the positive words related to “pleasant” are more frequent than words related to “unpleasant”. However, in both cases words related to “pleasant” and to “unpleasant” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, “unpleasant”-related words, although low in both cases, are about 11 times more frequent in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “unpleasant” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “unpleasant”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 9. Friendly vs. 10. Unfriendly

In general both words related to “friendly” and “unfriendly” are very little used in either case. In the case of official tourism websites “friendly”-related words represent 0.10‰ of the total and words related to “unfriendly” are very infrequent, almost inexistent, representing less than 0.01‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “friendly” are more frequent in comparison, 0.51‰, about 5 times more frequent, and

words related to “unfriendly” only 0.01‰, the lowest frequency of all dichotomies of the travel blogs and reviews.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent word for “friendly” is: friendly. The most frequent word related to “unfriendly” is: hostile. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “friendly”-related word is: friendly. The most frequent “unfriendly”-related word is: unfriendly.

In both cases the positive words related to “friendly” are more frequent than words related to “unfriendly”. However, in both cases words related to “friendly” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, in the case of “unfriendly”, related words are almost inexistent in both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, “friendly” words are 50 times more frequent than “unfriendly” words, which is very significant. Neither on official tourism websites nor in travel blogs and reviews, is Catalonia described as unfriendly. It is notable that in both cases, if adjectives related to friendliness are to be used, these are related to the positive version “friendly”.

- 11. Fun/interesting vs. 12. Boring

In general, we can see that words related especially to “fun/interesting” are used quite often within both official tourism websites texts and travel blogs and reviews.

In the case of official tourism websites, “fun/interesting”-related words represent 3.07‰ of the total and words related to “boring” are very infrequent, representing only 0.03‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “fun/interesting” are slightly more frequent in comparison, 5.69‰, and words related to “boring” score only 0.39‰.

In the case of official tourism websites the most frequent words for “fun/interesting” are: enjoy, interesting, enjoying and fun. The most frequent words related to “boring” are: serious, bored and dull. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “fun/interesting”-related words are: fun, interesting, enjoy, crazy. The most frequent “boring”-related words are: boring, serious, bored and uneventful.

In both cases, the positive words related to “fun/interesting” are more frequent than words related to “boring”. However, also in both cases words related to “fun/interesting” and to “boring” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, “boring”-related words, although low in both cases, are about 13 times more frequent in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “boring” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “boring”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 13. Lively vs. 14. Gloomy

In the case of official tourism websites, “lively”-related words represent 0.69‰ of the total, and words related to “gloomy” are infrequent, representing 0.09‰. In the case of travel

blogs and reviews, words related to “lively” are slightly less frequent in comparison, 0.60‰, and words related to “gloomy” score only 0.17‰.

In the case of official tourism websites the most frequent words for “lively” are: active, alive, lively and bustling. The most frequent word related to “gloomy” is: shady. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “lively”-related words are: alive, lively, vibrant and bustling. The most frequent “gloomy”-related words are: cloudy, overcast and shady.

In both cases, the positive words related to “lively” are more frequent than words related to “gloomy”. However, in this case, words related to “lively” are more frequent on the official tourism websites and “gloomy”-related words are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, negative “gloomy”-related words, are much more present in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. Again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “gloomy” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “gloomy”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 15. Noisy vs. 16. Quiet

In the case of official tourism websites, “noisy”-related words represent only 0.17‰ of the total and words related to “quiet” are more frequent, representing only 0.84‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “noisy” are considerably more frequent in comparison, 0.88‰, and words related to “quiet” are slightly less frequent representing 0.66‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “noisy” are: busy, bustle and noise. The most frequent words related to “quiet” are: calm, quiet and peaceful. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “noisy”-related words are: busy, loud, noise and noisy. The most frequent “quiet”-related words are: quiet, peaceful, calm and lonely.

In this case, for the first time official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews present opposite images concerning noisiness or quietness. Words related to “noisy” are more frequent than words related to “quiet” in travel blogs and reviews, whilst in the case of official tourism websites words related to “quiet” are more frequent than those related to “noisy”. We could say therefore, that bloggers and reviewers associate Catalonia more with noisiness, and that in contrast, official tourism websites describe Catalonia as being mostly a quiet place.

- 17. Full vs. 18. Empty

In the case of official tourism websites “full”-related words are very infrequent and represent only 0.24‰ of the total, and words related to “empty” are even more infrequent, representing only 0.03‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “full” are

a considerably more frequent in comparison having a density of 1.66‰ and words related to “empty” score only 0.22‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “full” are: traffic and multitude. The most frequent word related to “empty” are: deserted and empty. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “full”-related words are: crowded, crowd/s and traffic. The most frequent “empty”-related words are: empty and deserted.

In both cases, the positive words related to “full” are more frequent than words related to “empty”. However, the proportion in which they do so is different. In the case of official tourism websites, “full”-related words are 6 times more frequent than “empty”-related words, and in the case of travel blogs and reviews they is about eight times more frequent. Moreover, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, the words related to “full” are considerably frequent overall, whilst in the case of official tourism websites neither “full” nor “empty” words are used frequently. This means that bloggers and reviewers associate Catalonia to a certain extent with “full” places and tourist crowds, even traffic.

- 19. Orderly vs. 20. Chaotic

In the case of official tourism websites, “orderly”-related words represent 0.25‰ of the total and words related to “chaotic” are less frequent, representing only 0.10‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “orderly” are slightly more frequent in comparison, 0.42‰, and words related to “chaotic” score 0.29‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “orderly” are: regular, arranged, organized and harmonious. The most frequent words related to “chaotic” are: rambling and maze. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “orderly”-related words are: neat, regular, arranged and organized. The most frequent “chaotic”-related words are: maze, confused, hectic and chaos.

In both cases, the positive words related to “orderly” are more frequent than words related to “chaotic”. However, in this case, words related to “orderly” and to “chaotic” are more frequent in travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, “chaotic” negative related words, are comparatively more present in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. In relative terms, the negative words related to “chaotic” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “chaotic”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 21. Clean vs. 22. Dirty

In the case of official tourism websites, “clean”-related words represent 0.17‰ of the total and words related to “dirty” are infrequent, representing only 0.09‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “clean” are slightly more frequent in comparison, 0.42‰, and words related to “dirty” score only 0.38‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “clean” are: clean, pure and unspoilt/unspoiled. The most frequent word related to “dirty” is: stained. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “clean”-related words are: clean and pure. The most frequent “dirty”-related words are: stained, dirty, seedy and dusty.

In both cases, the positive words related to “clean” are more frequent than words related to “dirty”. However, in this case, words related to “clean” are more frequent on the official tourism websites and “dirty”-related words are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. Remarkably, negative “dirty”-related words, are much more present in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. In fact, in travel blogs and reviews both concepts of cleanliness and dirtiness have almost the same density. As expected, official tourism websites will not use “dirty”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting.

- 23. Relax vs. 24. Distress

In general we can see that words related to “relax” are used quite often especially within travel blogs and reviews.

In the case of official tourism websites, “relax”-related words represent 0.53‰ of the total and words related to “distress” are very infrequent, representing only 0.06‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “relax” are three times more frequent than on official tourism websites and account for 1.41‰, and words related to “distress” score only 0.12‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “relax” are: rest, relax and relaxing. The most frequent word related to “distress” are: depression and suffering. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the most frequent “relax”-related words are: rest, relaxing, relax, and relaxed. The most frequent “distress”-related words are: stressful, suffering, disturbing and worrying.

In both cases, the positive words related to “relax” are more frequent than words related to “distress”. However, in both cases, words related to “relax” and to “distress” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. It is remarkable that “distress”-related words are very low in both cases, but, again, in relative terms, the negative words related to “distress” are more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “distress”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting. Catalonia is described by both official tourism websites and by travel blogs and reviews as more “relaxing” than “distressing”.

- 25. Authentic vs. 26. Inauthentic

In general we can see that words related to “authentic” are used with considerable frequency both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. Conversely, words related to “inauthentic” are used very little in both cases.

In the case of official tourism websites, “authentic”-related words represent 1.67‰ of the total, and words related to “inauthentic” are very infrequent, representing only 0.02‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “authentic” are slightly more frequent than on official tourism websites and account for 2.04‰ and words related to “inauthentic” score only 0.23‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “authentic” are: unique, original, real and true. The most frequent words related to “inauthentic” are: false and fictitious. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the most frequent “authentic”-related words are: real, unique, original and true. The most frequent “inauthentic”-related words are: not real, fake and false.

In both cases, the positive words related to “authentic” are more frequent than words related to “inauthentic”. In both cases, words related to “authentic” and to “inauthentic” are more frequent within travel blogs and reviews. It is remarkable that “inauthentic”-related words are extremely low in both cases. In spite of the latter, we should mention that the negative words related to “inauthentic” are about 10 times more frequent in proportion in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites. This can be explained because official tourism websites will not use “inauthentic”-related words to describe the destination they are promoting, but instead, tourists may express them if they find something to be inauthentic. All in all, it seems that both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews describe Catalonia’s sites and experiences as much more “authentic” than “inauthentic”.

- 27. New/Fashionable vs. 28. Old/old-fashioned

In general, we can see that both words related to “new/fashionable” and to “old/old-fashioned” are used with considerable frequency on both official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews

In the case of official tourism websites, “new/fashionable”-related words represent 2.37‰ of the total, and words related to “old/old-fashioned” are almost twice as frequent and represent 4.15‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “new/fashionable” are slightly less frequent than on official tourism websites and account for 2.07‰. The same happens with words related to “old/old-fashioned”, which are less frequent in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites, with 2.89‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “new/fashionable” are: new, modern, contemporary and innovative. The most frequent words related to “old/old-fashioned” are: old, ancient and classical. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “new/fashionable”-related words are: new, modern, contemporary and trendy. The most frequent “old/old-fashioned”-related words are: old, traditional, ancient and quaint.

In both cases, the words related to “old/old-fashioned” are more frequent than words related to “new/fashionable”. It is remarkable that “old/old-fashioned”-related words are the most common. This can be explained because much of the heritage is described as being

old. However, the proportions of this are different. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, both “new/fashionable” words and “old/old-fashioned” words have similar densities, this means that probably for bloggers, Catalonia is both identified with newness and old age, having a dual image in this respect.

- 29. Cheap vs. 30. Expensive

In the case of official tourism websites, both adjectives related to “cheap” and to “expensive” are almost inexistent. “Cheap”-related words represent only 0.04‰ of the total, and words related to “expensive” are just slightly more frequent, representing only 0.08‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “cheap” and “expensive” are more frequent in comparison. Words related to “cheap”-represent 0.89‰ and words related to “expensive” are slightly less frequent representing 0.73‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “cheap” are: discount and affordable. The most frequent word related to “expensive” is: luxury. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “cheap”-related words are: cheap, cheaper, and discount. The most frequent “expensive”-related words are: expensive, overpriced, pricey and luxury.

In this case, official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews present opposite images concerning cheapness or expensiveness. Words related to “expensive” are twice as mentioned as words related to “cheap”, meaning that official tourism websites associate Catalonia more with luxury than with cheapness. On the contrary, in travel blogs and reviews, words related to “cheap” are slightly more frequent than those related to “expensive”. We could say then, that bloggers and reviewers associate Catalonia more with cheapness; however, densities of both concepts are almost equal, indicating that bloggers make both comments about sites and products being “cheap” and “expensive”.

- 31. Modest/poor vs. 32. Luxurious/wealthy

In the case of official tourism websites, both adjectives related to “modest/poor” and to “luxurious/wealthy” have similar densities. “Modest/poor”-related words represent 0.50‰ of the total words and words related to “luxurious/wealthy” are just slightly less frequent, representing 0.43‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, words related to “modest/poor” are slightly denser than in the case of official tourism websites, 0.56‰, but the numbers are almost equal. Within travel blogs and reviews, words related to “luxurious/wealthy” are about half as frequent (0.27‰) as words related to “modest/poor” and also less frequent if compared to official tourism websites.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent words for “modest/poor” are: plain and simple. The most frequent words related to “luxurious/wealthy” are: wealth, elegant and gourmet. In the case of travel blog and review entries, the most frequent “modest/poor”-related words are: poor, simple, plain and ordinary. The most frequent “luxurious/wealthy”-related words are: elegant, wealthy, wealth and gourmet.

In this case, official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews present similar densities of words related to “modest/poor”, which are in both cases higher than the words related to “luxurious/wealthy”. However, in the case of words related to “luxurious/wealthy”, the official tourism websites seem to use these words considerably more than bloggers.

- 33. Safe vs. 34. Unsafe

In the case of official tourism websites, “unsafe”-related words represent only 0.08‰ of the total, and words related to “safe” are more frequent, representing 0.43‰. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, on the contrary, words related to “unsafe” are much denser, 0.77‰, if compared to official tourism websites. They are also denser if compared to the words related to “safe” in the travel blogs and reviews texts, which account for 0.27‰.

In the case of official tourism websites, the most frequent word related to “safe” are: protected and safe. The most frequent words for “unsafe” are: danger and crime.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the most frequent “safe”-related words are: safe, secure and protected. The most frequent “unsafe”-related words are: stolen, dangerous, thieves and dodgy. Words related to pickpockets are also very frequent.

In this case, official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews present opposite images concerning safeness or unsafeness. Words related to “unsafe” are much more frequent than words related to “safe” in travel blogs and reviews, whilst in the case of official tourism websites, words related to “safe” are more frequent than those related to “unsafe”. We could say then, that bloggers and reviewers associate Catalonia more with unsafeness, warning other bloggers about the thefts and pickpocketing they may have suffered, and instead, official tourism websites describe Catalonia as generally being a safe place. As unsafety is a very sensitive issue, which may affect tourist decisions and satisfaction, as expected, official tourism websites do not mention this aspect. However, we should wonder if it would not be better to warn tourists before to avoid their ulterior dissatisfaction?

3.2.1.3.2. Feelings and dichotomies presence per file

In general we observe that the travel blog and review files have higher means of feelings and attributes than the official tourism website files (see table 3.32). This probably means that tourists’ texts express more feelings, use more attributes and give more their opinions than official tourism websites.

1. Good feelings vs. 2. Bad feelings: On official tourism websites 1. “Good feelings” have a mean of 3.57 appearances per file whilst in the case of travel blogs and reviews this mean is slightly higher (4.16). Despite having similar means of appearances per file, the standard deviation in the case of official tourism websites (15.13) is much higher than in travel blogs and reviews (6.01). This means that the appearance of good feelings in official tourism files is much more irregular, in some files many feelings may appear while in others very few. By contrast, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, these feelings are much more regularly spread among files, meaning that in most files good feelings are present at a remarkable rate. 2. “Bad feelings”, have, in both cases, much lower means than good feelings. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the presence of Bad feelings (0.85) is higher than on official tourism websites (0.26). The standard deviation is higher in the case of travel blogs (2.12)

but if compared to the mean it shows that the deviation is not very high and that therefore, most files may contain some bad or negative feelings.

3. Love vs. 4. Hate: The means of adjectives related to 3. “Love” are low in both types of files. However, the mean is higher in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.27) than on official tourism websites (0.18). The words related to 4. “Hate” are practically non-existent in both cases and have very low means, lower than 0.01 in the case of official tourism websites and 0.02 in the case of travel blogs and reviews. However, we observe that in this latter case the standard deviation is of 0.17, meaning that although in general adjectives related to hate are low in some specific blog and review files these adjectives are high, meaning some hateful experiences may have occurred to some bloggers and they may have explained them online.

5. Beautiful vs. 6. Ugly: In general, again, adjectives related to 5. “beautiful” are much more present than words related to 6. “ugly”. In this case, it is on official tourism websites that adjectives related to 5. “Beautiful” have a higher mean (1.2) per file. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, this mean is about one half of the other (0.66). As we can see, on average, official tourism websites describe Catalonia as being highly beautiful. However, we observe that the standard deviation is 8.01, meaning that again, this attribute may not be used regularly among the files. Adjectives related to 6. “Ugly” have very low means both on official tourism websites (0.03) and in travel blogs and reviews (0.01). However, again, in this last case the standard deviation of data is high if compared to the mean (0.15), probably meaning that some specific bloggers or reviewers describe Catalonia as being ugly.

7. Pleasant vs. 8. Unpleasant: In this case, in general words related to 7. “pleasant” are more frequent than words related to 8. “unpleasant” in all cases, but have low total averages. We observe that the mean of words related to pleasant is higher in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.09) than on official tourism websites (0.2). 8. “unpleasant”-related words have very low means in both cases.

9. Friendly vs. 10. Unfriendly: Friendliness has, in both cases, higher means than unfriendliness. 9. “Friendly” has a mean of appearances in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.06) which doubles the mean on official tourism websites (0.03). As can be seen, the standard deviations are high in both cases, especially in the case of official tourism websites (0.26). This means that the presence of “friendly”-related words among the files is very irregular and that some files may promote the friendliness of Catalonia very insistently while some others may barely mention it. Adjectives related to 10: “unfriendly” have means below 0.01 in both cases.

11. Fun/interesting vs. 12. Boring: It can be seen that adjectives related to 11. “fun/interesting” have much higher means in both cases than adjectives related to 12. “boring”. In this case, it can be seen that official tourism websites convey a higher mean per file of adjectives related to 11. “fun/interesting” (0.95) than travel blogs and reviews (0.63). Although both means are similar, official tourism websites describe Catalonia and its attractions more as being fun/interesting. However, the standard deviation is quite high in this case (4.30), which indicates that these descriptions using fun/interesting words may not

occur regularly among files. Adjectives related to 12. “boring”, however, have a higher average presence in travel blogs and reviews (0.04).

13. Lively vs. 14. Gloomy: “Lively”-related adjectives are more used than adjectives related to gloomy. In this case the average presence of adjectives related to 13. “lively” is higher in the case of official tourism websites (0.21) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.07), which indicates that official websites give far more stress to the lively character of Catalonia and its places than bloggers. Adjectives related to 14. “gloomy” have a very low presence in both cases.

15. Noisy vs. 16. Quiet: We observe that 16. “Quiet” is much more present in the case of official tourism websites (0.26) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.07). However, 15. “Noisy”-related words are more present in travel blogs and reviews (0.1) than on official tourism websites (0.05). It is very remarkable that in the case of travel blogs and reviews, “noisy”-related adjectives are more present on average than “quiet”-related adjectives. This indicates an image dissonance between both types of files. While official tourism websites stress the quietness of Catalonia and its places, bloggers and reviewers mention more its “noisiness”.

17. Full vs 18. Empty: In this case, words related to 17. “full” are more present than words related to 18. “empty” in both cases. Words related to “full” have considerably higher presence on average in travel blogs and reviews (0.18) if compared to official tourism websites (0.08); words related to “empty” have very low means in both cases. This means that bloggers and reviewers see Catalonia and its attractions being far fuller than empty, which can be explained because of the touristification and sometimes massification of some areas that would not be reflected on official tourism websites.

19. Orderly vs 20. Chaotic: For these attributes, it is 19. “orderly” that has a higher mean in both cases. Official tourism websites stress more the 19. “orderly” aspect of Catalonia (0.08) than travel blogs and reviews (0.05). However, in the first case the standard deviation is considerably higher (0.67) meaning that this aspect is irregularly spread among official tourism website files. In both cases, adjectives related to 20. “chaotic” have a low average of 0.03 of mentions per file. However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, both attributes are quite close.

21. Clean vs. 21. Dirty: In both cases 21. “clean” adjectives are more present and have the same average presence of only 0.05 per file. Words related to 22. “dirty” are a little less present on average on official tourism websites, 0.03, if compared to travel blogs and reviews, 0.04. All in all, we see that these attributes are not very used in either case and that both of them appear in both cases.

23. Relax vs. 24. Distress: In both cases, 23. “relax”-related adjectives are more present and have the same average presence in both types of files of only 0.16 per file. However, we observe that the standard deviation in the case of official tourism websites (1.01) is about double the deviation found in travel blogs and reviews, which means that the words related to relax are irregularly distributed among official tourism website files, while they seem to

be more regularly spread in the case of travel blogs and reviews. Words related to 24. “distress” have very low average mentions in both cases.

25. Authentic vs. 26. Inauthentic: In both cases 25. “authentic”-related adjectives are more present than 26. “inauthentic”-related adjectives. In the case of official tourism websites, 25. “authentic”-related words have an average presence of 0.52 per file, while in travel blogs and reviews, this presence is of only 0.22. The standard deviation is, in the case of official tourism websites, quite high, at 2.03, which means that adjectives related to authentic are not regularly distributed among files. Adjectives related to inauthentic have a very low presence on average.

27. New/fashionable vs. 28. Old /old-fashioned: In both cases, adjectives related to 28. “Old/old-fashioned” are more present than adjectives related to 27. “new/fashionable”. Regarding 28. “old/old-fashioned” adjectives, these are much more present on official tourism websites on average (1.29) than in travel blogs and reviews (0.32). In turn, adjectives related to 27. “new/fashionable” are also more present on average on official tourism websites (0.73) than in travel blogs and reviews (0.23). It seems that official tourism websites describe Catalonia and its attraction factors as being old, with history, but also as being fashionable and new. This temporal aspect does not seem so important for travel blogs and reviews.

29. Cheap vs. 30. Expensive: In this case we observe a dissonance between both images. In the case of official tourism websites, we observe that adjectives related to 30. “expensive” are more present (0.03) than adjectives related to 29. “cheap”, whilst in the case of travel blogs adjectives related to 29. “cheap” (0.10) are more present than the ones related to 30. “expensive” (0.08). However, in general in both cases, the adjectives have a higher mean in the case of official tourism websites meaning that bloggers have a major sensitivity to price than official tourism websites, which barely mention this aspect.

31. Modest/poor vs. 32. Luxurious/wealthy: In both cases, words related to 31. “modest/poor” are more present. In the case of official tourism websites, both adjectives have similar means, 0.15 for “modest/poor” and 0.13 for “luxurious/wealthy”. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, modest/poor adjectives (0.06) have about double the average presence than the ones related to luxurious/wealthy (0.03). It is remarkable that the standard deviation of luxurious/wealthy adjectives is very high in both cases, about eight times higher than average in both types of files. This means that the words are irregularly distributed among files and that some files have very few mentions of these adjectives while others have many. This could show that official tourism websites segment luxury tourism, and that only some documents talk about it, and that at the same time, only some bloggers-tourists talk about it because they may be a small segment interested in luxury.

33. Safe vs. 34. Unsafe: This dichotomy indicates one of the clearest image dissonances between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. While the first emphasize the 33. “safe”-related words (0.13) more, the others give more emphasis to 34. “unsafe” aspect of the place (0.08). In this sense, official tourism websites promote Catalonia and its destinations as being safe while bloggers and reviewers who talk about this subject, consider it to be unsafe.

Table 3.32
Descriptive statistics feelings and dichotomies

Attraction Factor	Official tourism websites (44,295 u. w.)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 u.w.)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
1. Good feelings	11,144	3.57	15.13	228.96	105,519	4.16	6.01	36.07
2. Bad feelings	807	0.26	1.55	2.39	21,591	0.85	2.12	4.49
3. Love	573	0.18	0.85	0.72	6,973	0.27	0.78	0.61
4. Hate	7	0.00	0.06	0.00	484	0.02	0.17	0.03
5. Beautiful	3,754	1.20	8.01	64.19	16,799	0.66	1.51	2.26
6. Ugly	6	0.00	0.03	0.00	341	0.01	0.15	0.02
7. Pleasant	632	0.20	1.24	1.54	2,389	0.09	0.40	0.16
8. Unpleasant	8	0.00	0.07	0.00	310	0.01	0.13	0.02
9. Friendly	99	0.03	0.26	0.07	1,434	0.06	0.27	0.07
10. Unfriendly	2	0.00	0.03	0.00	34	0.00	0.05	0.00
11. Fun/interesting	2,966	0.95	4.30	18.49	15,885	0.63	1.32	1.74
12. Boring	33	0.01	0.09	0.01	1,077	0.04	0.25	0.06
13. Lively	663	0.21	0.98	0.97	1,675	0.07	0.33	0.11
14. Gloomy	89	0.03	0.21	0.04	469	0.02	0.15	0.02
15. Noisy	162	0.05	0.39	0.15	2,467	0.10	0.41	0.17
16. Quiet	812	0.26	0.96	0.92	1,835	0.07	0.36	0.13
17. Empty	31	0.01	0.12	0.01	626	0.02	0.21	0.05
18. Full	236	0.08	0.50	0.25	4,637	0.18	0.63	0.40
19. Orderly	241	0.08	0.67	0.45	1,178	0.05	0.28	0.08
20. Chaotic	101	0.03	0.27	0.07	805	0.03	0.24	0.06
21. Clean	164	0.05	0.30	0.09	1,161	0.05	0.28	0.08
22. Dirty	84	0.03	0.43	0.19	1,060	0.04	0.31	0.10
23. Relax	508	0.16	1.01	1.02	3,943	0.16	0.54	0.29
24. Distress	55	0.02	0.17	0.03	343	0.01	0.14	0.02
25. Authentic	1619	0.52	2.03	4.10	5,703	0.22	0.69	0.48
26. Inauthentic	15	0.00	0.07	0.01	647	0.03	0.20	0.04
27. New/Fashionable	2296	0.73	4.03	16.22	5,771	0.23	0.76	0.58
28. Old/old-fashioned	4016	1.29	5.25	27.53	8,059	0.32	1.10	1.21
29. Cheap	35	0.01	0.24	0.06	2,485	0.10	0.42	0.17
30. Expensive	80	0.03	0.21	0.05	2,043	0.08	0.35	0.12
31. Modest/poor	480	0.15	0.84	0.71	1,569	0.06	0.31	0.10
32. Luxurious/wealthy	418	0.13	0.90	0.80	759	0.03	0.24	0.06
33. Safe	414	0.13	0.67	0.45	779	0.03	0.21	0.04
34. Unsafe	75	0.02	0.23	0.05	2,150	0.08	0.47	0.22

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

3.2.1.3.3. Correlations between feelings and dichotomies

In general, we observe that in the case of official tourism websites, good feelings and positive adjectives such as love, fun/interesting, authentic, etc. have much stronger correlations than negative adjectives or bad feelings with other adjectives, especially those which are also positive. Moreover, the results show that official tourism website files combine different types of positive feelings and adjectives, probably to reach as wide an audience as possible.

In the case of **official tourism websites** (see Annex C, Table C.3), the strongest correlations among feelings and dichotomies can be found between the adjectives 5. “Beautiful” and 9.

“Friendly” (0.97), between 5. “Beautiful” and 7. “Pleasant” (0.93), and between 9. “Friendly” and 7. “Pleasant”, for which this correlation is extraordinarily strong. This means that for official tourism websites, the three adjectives that always appear together and that are strongly associated when describing Catalonia and its destinations, and that represent a “pack” of adjectives always together are: Beautiful, Pleasant and Friendly.

Then, some other remarkably strong correlations, above 0.80, are between 1. “Good feelings” and two adjectives, 28. “old/old-fashioned” and 25. “Authentic”. These relationships could be expected if we take into account that the description of heritage and places (referring to them as old with history and as authentic) and the use of positive, good feelings about the place are usually displayed together. Another correlation above 0.80 is that of 7. “Pleasant” and 11. “Fun/interesting”. Official tourism files associate pleasure with having fun and being interesting.

Some other strong correlations, above 0.70, can be found between 1. “Good feelings” and other feelings or adjectives: 3. “love”, 31. “modest/poor” and 2. “Bad feelings”. These strong correlations are also found between the adjectives 3. “Love” and 13 “lively”, 11. “Fun/interesting” and other adjectives: 5. “beautiful”, 9. “friendly” and 13. “Lively”. The strong correlation between adjectives of good feelings and love can be easily explained as love is a good feeling itself and therefore they are usually mentioned together. Similarly, love and lively can be related when describing places to visit where a combined description of love and lively adjectives may be expected. Fun/interesting-related adjectives also seem to be strongly related to beautiful adjectives, friendly adjectives and are probably mentioned together when describing the destination, the activities and the people within it. However, good feelings and modest/poor adjectives or bad feelings would not seem to be related as they seem to be contradictory. This means that when bad feelings or adjectives related to the destination appear, good feelings are also mentioned. Other strong correlations above 0.70 can be found between 25. “authentic” and other adjectives such as 27. “new/fashionable”, 28. “old/old-fashioned” and 32. “luxurious wealthy”. It seems that the adjectives related to authenticity appear combined with new/fashionable things or luxury/wealth, which may be said to be authentic or that Catalonia, despite having modern, fashionable and luxury elements, preserves its authenticity and is a wealthy place, old/old-fashioned adjectives are also related to authenticity, probably in the sense that the Catalan heritage is old with history. Another correlation is found between 27. “new/fashionable” and 32. “luxurious/wealthy”. It seems that the concept of modernity, of new trends and elements and fashion is related to luxury and to wealth.

Finally, for this type of files are the correlations of 0.6 or above. We find correlations between 1. “good feelings” and some adjectives such as 13. “lively”, 16. “quiet”, 23. “Relax”, 27. “new/fashionable” and 32. “Luxurious/wealthy”. It seems that both liveliness of the destination and quietness and relax are associated with good feelings on official tourism websites, probably to target different publics. Good feelings are also associated to the fact that Catalonia is new, modern, fashionable, wealthy and that luxury products can be found there. 2. “bad feelings” are associated with 3. “love”, 27. “new/fashionable” and 31. “modest/poor”. The relationship between bad feelings and love and new words does not make much sense. It could be that the case files would be explaining the pros and cons of different places and attractions. It is comprehensible that bad feelings are associated to

adjectives related to modest/poor, as these usually have a pejorative connotation for tourists.

Category 3. “love” words are correlated to 11. “fun/interesting” and to 25. “Authentic”. Interestingly, the adjectives related to 11. “fun/interesting” are related to 21. “Clean”, meaning that official tourism files describe fun/interesting places as being clean. 13. “Lively” is also related to 25. “authentic”. 18. “full” and 25. “Authentic” are associated, which may be due to the fact that these files describe some monuments or heritage as authentic but also as very touristy places. Finally, 23. “relax” is correlated to 25. “Authentic”. 27. “new/fashionable” is associated with 28. “old/old-fashioned”. This seemingly contradictory association may be due to the fact that official tourism websites highlight both the old and the new aspects of the destination. 28. old/old-fashioned” is also related to 31. “modest/poor and 32. “Luxurious wealthy”.

In the case of **travel blog and review** entries (See Annex C, Table C.4), correlations between feelings and adjectives are, in general, much lower than in the case of official tourism website files. Moreover, good and bad feelings seem to be more strongly correlated with other adjectives. Therefore, in this case, only significant correlations above 0.30 will be commented on in the case of good and bad feelings, and above 0.25 for the different attributes. Besides, positive adjectives seem to be the most correlated to other positive adjectives. Negative adjectives usually have lower correlations.

Surprisingly, 1. “Good feelings” are most strongly correlated (above 0.60) to 2. “Bad feelings”. This indicates that bloggers express both good and bad feelings in the same files. 1. “Good feelings” are also correlated above 0.60 to 11. “fun/interesting” and to 5. “Beautiful”. It is significant that bloggers mention together or associate good feelings with having fun and being interesting as well as with beauty. Then, the rest of correlations above 0.30 are, in this order: 3. “Love”, 23. “Relax”, 27. “new/fashionable”, 7. “Pleasant”, 28. “Old/old-fashioned”, 18. “Full”, 15. “noisy”. It is interesting that bloggers mention together and may associate good feelings with love, relax and pleasant feelings. They also associate good feelings with adjectives related more to the attributes of places and attractions (new/fashionable, old/old-fashioned, and luxurious/wealthy).

In the case of 2. “Bad feelings”, the strongest correlation can be found with 11. “Fun/interesting”. This means that bad feelings, when expressed, appear along with adjectives related to fun/interesting. They are also correlated to 23. “Relax”, 3. “Love” and 5. “Beautiful”, also positive adjectives. This probably indicates that bloggers, despite using bad feelings in their texts, also use positive adjectives, meaning that their views are not entirely negative but that they combine descriptions of their good and bad experiences and feelings.

Category 3. “Love”, is correlated mainly to other positive adjectives, especially to 5. “Beautiful” and 11. “Fun/interesting”. 5. “Beautiful” is also correlated to other positive attributes such as 7. “Pleasant”, 11. “fun/interesting” and to 28. “old/old-fashioned” probably referring to heritage, as both beautiful and old with history. 11. “fun/interesting” in turn is also correlated to 18. “Full”, 23. “Relax” and 27. “New/fashionable”. This means that when bloggers talk about fun/interesting things or experiences they sometimes also talk about them as being full (probably very popular among tourists), but also relaxed

(associating the combination of a fun and relaxing experience at the same time) and with interesting or new/fashionable assets or sights.

Category 15. “noisy”, is correlated to 18. “Full”. This correlation was expected as tourists who may find a place or site noisy may be also be concerned about it being full or packed with people. This correlation is very interesting since in the case of official tourism websites, the word “noisy” was not strongly correlated with other adjectives while in this case we can be sure that some tourists mention the noisiness of some Catalan destinations and that these tourists are also talking (or complaining) about them being full. 27. “New/fashionable” is correlated to 28. “old/old-fashioned”, meaning that tourists usually describe Catalonia as having new, modern assets but also old assets and heritage sites.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that when tourists use words related to 33. “Safe”, they use 1. “Good feelings” much more than 2. “Bad feelings” as their correlation is stronger. However, in the case of the use of 34. “unsafe” adjectives, bloggers in their comments use equally good and bad feelings, meaning this is a sensitive issue that may make the blogger write much more bad feelings that they would do otherwise.

In general terms, the adjectives that have strong correlations in the case of travel blogs and reviews coincide with the adjectives used in travel blogs and reviews.

See Annex C, Table C.3. Correlations among feelings and dichotomies on official tourism websites and Annex C, Table C.4. Correlations among feelings and dichotomies in travel blogs and reviews

3.2.1.4. Cultural identity analysis

This section presents results concerning cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references; Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music; Cuisine and drinks; The correlations between cultural identity elements, and the Zoom into Catalan language as a symbol of identity.

3.2.1.4.1 Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references

For the summary of categories used for cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references, see table 2.12.

- Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity presence with reference to the total databases

This section is dedicated to explaining how often both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews mention certain cultural identity backgrounds, which usually coincide with geographical areas with certain identities. These cultural, linguistic and geographical groups can be said to be ascribed to Catalonia when it is defined by them. The results are shown in table 3.33.

Official tourism websites identify Catalonia and its destinations with a logical crescent geographically-based order, identifying first the destinations with their Catalan identity and

Catalonia as a geographical boundary. This identification is very strong if compared to the other identity references as it accounts for 11.34%. It can be clearly seen that for official tourism websites, Catalonia and its destinations are defined as having and ascribed a Catalan cultural and geographic identity.

Secondly, official tourism websites identify Catalonia with its Spanish identity. This second identity has a density of 3.80% and is also quite strong indeed, although it has approximately a third of the density that the reference to Catalan identity has, or in other words, the Catalan identity is three times more present than the Spanish-Spain identity within the texts.

Thirdly comes Catalonia's Mediterranean identity (1.26%). Although it is not a very strong, cultural and geographical identity it is considerably present within official tourism websites, as Catalonia is in part famous because of its Mediterranean coastal area. Fourthly comes European identity, 1.19%, which is just slightly less strong than Mediterranean identity, but also significantly present. Catalonia is part of the European Union and has always been the closest part of Spain to Europe, hence this identity is present within texts. Finally comes global identity, which is very little reinforced by the official tourism websites (0.77%), probably because these sites want to promote the unique cultural and geographical identity of Catalonia.

Travel blog and review references to cultural and geographical identities do not seem to follow any logic geographical order. The cultural and geographical identity reference that is most mentioned within these blogs and reviews is Spanish identity, which has a density of 7.71%. It clearly is the most mentioned cultural, linguistic and geographical identity. In the second place comes the Catalan identity, which has a density of 2.55%. As we can see, Catalan identity has approximately one third of the density of Spanish identity, or in other words, Spanish identity is three times more mentioned than Catalan identity.

In the third place comes European identity (1.33%). This identity, although lower, is significantly present, and seemingly bloggers identify Catalonia with Europe. In fourth place comes Mediterranean identity (0.59%), which does not seem to be mentioned very often by bloggers, probably meaning this cultural and geographical identity is secondary for them. Finally comes global identity, which is the lowest (0.28%) meaning that bloggers do not associate Catalonia with a global, transnational identity.

If we compare the cultural, linguistic and geographical identity reflected on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews we can see a clear first important difference, which makes these identity images opposite: official tourism websites mention Catalan identity very strongly, three times more than Spanish identity, whilst travel blogs and reviews mention Spanish identity very strongly, three times more than Catalan identity. In this respect, we observe that despite the efforts of the official propaganda to promote a specific Catalan identity, for bloggers the main identity reference is Spain.

Regarding Mediterranean identity, we can see how it is about twice as present on official tourism websites than in travel blogs and reviews. According to the data, official sites give more emphasis to the Mediterranean cultural and geographical identity than bloggers.

Regarding European identity, we can see that it is almost equally mentioned in both types of texts, but it is slightly denser in the case of travel blogs and reviews. Seen in a global perspective, for bloggers, European identity is more associated with Catalonia and Catalan destinations. Finally, global identity is very little mentioned in both cases, especially in the case of travel blogs and reviews where it is practically non-existent.

Table 3.33

Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
Catalan	10,959	11.34‰	8.73	10,252	3.67‰	24.58
Spanish	3,671	3.80‰	34.00	21,537	7.71‰	15.01
Mediterranean	1,217	1.26‰	4.09	1,639	0.59‰	12.65
European	1,150	1.19‰	5.17	3,723	1.33‰	11.39
Global	747	0.77‰	3.92	770	0.28‰	7.38

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

- Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity presence per file

In this section we analyse the cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references present both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews per file. The results are shown in Table 3.34. In general, we observe that the means of the cultural identity backgrounds in the official tourism website files are higher than those of travel blogs and reviews.

In the case of official tourism websites, Catalan identity has the highest mean (3.51). However, this cultural identity background has a very high standard deviation of 19.10, meaning that such identity is not regularly spread among the documents. This shows that even on official tourism websites Catalan identity is not unanimously explained and promoted. Spanish identity comes second (1.18) but instead has a much smaller standard deviation (3.84). Although it is not so mentioned on average as Catalan identity it is more regularly spread among all files. The means of Mediterranean (0.39) and European (0.37) identities are similar. Finally comes global identity, with a mean of 0.24. However, this has a high standard deviation of 1.68, indicating that most files do not mention this identity but those which do may mention it considerably.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the identity with the highest mean is Spanish identity (0.85). Its standard deviation is not very high (2.45) which indicates that this identity appears regularly among the blogs. Catalan identity comes second (0.28) and its standard deviation is proportionally higher (1.05), which means that the mention of Catalan identity is lower and more irregularly spread among the files. In the third place comes European (0.15), then Mediterranean (0.06) followed by global identity (0.03), which has a very high standard deviation (0.24), which means its presence is very irregular among files.

Table 3.34

Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity presence per file

Identity references	Official tourism websites (44,295 u.w.)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 u.w.)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Catalan	10,959	3.51	19.10	364.83	10,250	0.40	1.40	1.96
Spanish	3,671	1.18	3.84	14.76	21,537	0.85	2.45	6.02
Mediterranean	1,217	0.39	1.64	2.70	1,639	0.06	0.38	0.14
European	1,150	0.37	1.86	3.45	3,723	0.15	0.62	0.38
Global	747	0.24	1.68	2.83	770	0.03	0.24	0.06

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

- Correlations of cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references

This section shows the correlations between the different identity references. In general, we observe that in official tourism websites the correlations shown among different cultural identities are much stronger than in the case of travel blogs and reviews.

Table 3.35

Correlations among cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references on official tourism websites

Identity references	Catalan	Spanish	Mediterranean	European	Global
Catalan	1.000	0.665	0.700	0.816	0.739
Spanish	0.665	1.000	0.493	0.545	0.461
Mediterranean	0.700	0.493	1.000	0.723	0.577
European	0.816	0.545	0.723	1.000	0.700
Global	0.739	0.461	0.577	0.700	1.000

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) files in English

Table 3.36

Correlations among cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references in travel blogs and reviews

Identity references	Catalan	Spanish	Mediterranean	European	Global
Catalan	1.000	0.235	0.092	0.079	0.095
Spanish	0.235	1.000	0.168	0.247	0.151
Mediterranean	0.092	0.168	1.000	0.114	0.067
European	0.079	0.247	0.114	1.000	0.104
Global	0.095	0.151	0.067	0.104	1.000

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Database: 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

Regarding official tourism websites, table 3.35 shows that the strongest correlation of all is found between Catalan and European identities (0.816). This indicates that whenever Catalan identity is mentioned, so is European identity. It is remarkable that after European identity, Catalan identity is mostly correlated to global identity (0.739), then with Mediterranean identity (0.700) and finally with Spanish identity (0.665). This shows that Catalan identity has the weakest correlation of all with Spanish identity. Although both identities appear together in many files they do not appear so often as the other identities.

In spite of that, for Spanish identity, Catalan identity is the one with which it is mostly correlated.

Another strong correlation can be found between Mediterranean and European identity (0.723) and between European and global identity (0.700). As can be seen, European identity is very strongly associated to both Mediterranean identity and to global identity, and not so much to Spanish identity.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews (as seen in Table 3.36), the strongest correlation can be found between Spanish identity and European identity (0.247), which is opposite to what has been shown on official tourism websites. Then, the second strongest correlation is between Spanish identity and Catalan identity (0.235), which is also very different from what we see on official tourism websites. In this case it is Spanish identity which is most strongly correlated to Mediterranean identity (0.168) and to global identity (0.151). In general, cultural identity correlations are very different depending on the type of files studied; the major difference in the case of blogs and reviews is that the stronger correlations can be found with Spanish identity whilst in the case of official tourism websites the stronger correlations are found with Catalan identity.

3.2.1.4.2. Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music

- Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music with reference to the total database

The analysis of the presence, density and weight with reference to the total database was divided into three subgroups of categories so as to be more comprehensible (see Table 3.37):

1) The first group of identity attraction factors in table 3.37 refers to intangible heritage **traditions and events** (having specific dates).

At first sight, we can observe that some of the traditions have a high density if compared to others and are similarly mentioned in travel blogs and reviews and on official tourism websites. These traditions can be said to be similarly represented in both types of files and show image concordance. This is the case of “Carnival”, which is the intangible heritage tradition most mentioned both on official tourism websites (0.32‰) and in travel blogs and reviews (0.43‰). Despite being mentioned extensively in both types of files, its density is higher in travel blogs and reviews, meaning that tourists-bloggers give more value to this tradition. Although carnival is well rooted in Catalonia, it is not specifically a Catalan tradition as it is celebrated all over the world. Therefore, we can say that the tradition which is most mentioned in both types of files is an international celebration that is well rooted in Catalonia. This is also the case of “religious traditions”, which have a very significant density of 0.30‰ in the case of official tourism websites and of 0.28‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews. They are the second intangible heritage tradition or event most mentioned in both cases. Finally, this is also the case of “festa major” (town festivity) which is mentioned equally on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews 0.13‰.

Some traditions such as “Rural and farming festivities” and “aplec”, “The Patum” (festivity of Berga, related to fire) are mentioned on official tourism websites with about 0.05-0.06‰ but

are hardly mentioned in travel blogs and reviews. Both the “fira del teatre” (theatre fair) and “Tarraco viva” (Roman festival) are hardly mentioned in either case.

Two very important festivities for Catalonia are “Sant Joan” (Saint John’s day, summer solstice) and “Sant Jordi” (Saint George’s day, spring equinox). On official tourism websites the festivity of “Sant Joan” has a low density of 0.03‰ while the festivity of “Sant Jordi” has the third highest density, 0.19‰. Travel blogs and reviews barely mention “Sant Joan” (0.01‰) and mention “Sant Jordi” (0.06‰) slightly more. In both cases, these festivities have a density three times higher on official tourism websites than in travel blogs and reviews. We observe that the festivity of Sant Jordi, the Catalan equivalent to Valentine’s day, is more mentioned in both cases. However, the Spanish and Anglo-Saxon tradition of Saint Valentine’s day is much less mentioned than Sant Jordi.

The “Castanyada” (All Saints celebration) is a Catalan tradition held on 31st October, which coincides with the Anglo-Saxon celebration of Halloween. In this case we observe that the castanyada celebration is very little mentioned in both types of texts, with a density of 0.01‰ on official tourism websites and of 0.00‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews. Instead, “Halloween”, though barely mentioned on official tourism websites is considerably mentioned in travel blogs and reviews with a density of 0.05‰. This indicates that, although on official tourism websites the Catalan autochthonous tradition for 31st October (la Castanyada) is more mentioned than Halloween, bloggers make far more mention of the global non-autochthonous celebration of Halloween.

Finally, the “Feria de Abril”, which is an Andalusian festivity also held in Catalonia by the Andalusian (im)migrants established there, is not mentioned at all on official tourism websites but it is mentioned 8 times in the case of travel blogs and reviews, although with a very low density of less than 0.01‰.

In general, we observe that specific Catalan traditions, celebrations and events, with a very specific Catalan cultural identity (Such as rural/farming festivities, Aplec, Patum, Fira del Teatre, Tarraco viva, Sant Joan, Sant Jordi and la Castanyada) are more mentioned on official tourism websites than in travel blogs and reviews, and that some traditions which are more international or have other cultural origins (religious traditions, Saint Valentine’s, Halloween Carnival and Feria de Abril) are in general more mentioned within travel bogs and reviews.

2) The second group of identity attraction factors in table 3.37 refers to **folkloric elements and customs.**

Regarding the specific Catalan folkloric elements and customs, we can see that some elements are similarly mentioned in both types of files. In the first place, “Castellers” (or human towers), a symbol of Catalan culture, are the folkloric element or custom most mentioned by official tourism websites (0.17‰) but not the first element mentioned by bloggers, despite having similar densities (0.16‰). The case of “giants and dwarfs”, a Catalan tradition, is similar and is also fairly present. It has a density of 0.09‰ within official tourism websites and of 0.08‰ in travel blogs and reviews. The “correfoc” (Catalan event related to fire) is also similarly present in both types of sites: 0.04‰ on official tourism websites and 0.05‰ in travel blogs and reviews. We observe that in both cases “castellers”

and “giants and dwarfs” customs are considerably present and that these 3 elements seem to have a congruent image between both types of files.

By contrast, the mention of “fireworks” is quite different between the different groups of texts. Official tourism websites show a relatively low presence of this element, 0.07‰, whilst it has a much higher density of 0.17‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews.

Next we come to two “typically Spanish” or Spanish identity-associated traditions: the “siesta” and “bullfighting”. Both elements are practically non-existent on official tourism websites but instead have very high densities in travel blogs and reviews: “bullfighting” has the highest density of all the folkloric traditions, 0.33‰, and “siesta” has the second highest density of all cultural traditions (0.23‰).

Although in the case of official tourism websites, the two most mentioned customs or folkloric elements have a very strong Catalan identity (Castellers, giants and dwarfs), in the case of bloggers, the specific Catalan traditions seem to come in second place and the Spanish-identified well-known traditions of bullfighting and siesta come first. It seems, then, that bloggers mention more elements belonging to Spanish cultural identity than to Catalan identity, despite the presence of Catalan elements.

3) The third group of identity attraction factors in table 3.37 refers to specific **dances and music**.

“Flamenco” and the “Spanish guitar” are the two most representative elements of the Spanish identity background. In the case of official tourism websites they are mentioned with moderate importance (0.06‰ Flamenco, and 0.02‰ the Spanish Guitar). However, these two elements are mentioned very often by bloggers and reviewers, becoming by far the two most mentioned music and dance elements, especially “flamenco” which has a density of 0.59‰, the highest density of all intangible traditions mentioned and also a high weight, meaning that this element is placed in very visible positions on websites. The “Spanish guitar” has a notable density of 0.15‰.

The “Sardana”, the Catalan national dance, is mentioned similarly on official tourism websites (0.08‰) and in travel blogs and reviews (0.09‰). Other “traditional Catalan dances” and “accordionists” gatherings are mentioned very little, both with a density of just 0.01‰ on official tourism websites and hardly mentioned in travel blogs and reviews.

Finally, three other types of international dances or dances from other cultures (ballet, belly dancing and salsa) were checked. All of them have a greatly reduced presence (0.01‰ or less) except for “ballet” which has a presence of 0.04‰ in the case of official tourism websites, and “salsa”, which has a significant 0.09‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews.

In general, we can see that bloggers identify Catalonia mostly with the “Flamenco” dance, which usually conveys a strong Spanish identity and that does not have its origin in Catalonia. The Catalan dance of “Sardana” is about 6 times less frequently mentioned than “Flamenco”. Conversely, in the case of official tourism websites, the dance with the highest density is the “Sardana”. International dances or dances from other cultures are very little

mentioned in general but it is remarkable that for travel blogs and reviews “salsa” dancing is as mentioned as the “Sardana”. This probably means that tourists either do not know or do not value the autochthonous Catalan dances very highly.

Table 3.37

References to cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
Festa Major	124	0.13‰	20.32	355	0.13‰	24.03
Rural/Farming festivities	45	0.05‰	10.89	26	0.01‰	31.15
Aplec	44	0.05‰	14.77	0	0.00‰	0.00
Patum	57	0.06‰	0.35	2	0.00‰	70.00
Fira del teatre	4	0.00‰	10.00	0	0.00‰	0.00
Tarraco viva	4	0.00‰	0.00	2	0.00‰	0.00
Religious traditions	293	0.30‰	7.41	780	0.28‰	17.30
Sant Joan	30	0.03‰	11.00	34	0.01‰	21.18
Sant Jordi	181	0.19‰	11.21	178	0.06‰	24.27
Castanyada	13	0.01‰	10.00	4	0.00‰	40.00
Saint Valentine	1	0.00‰	0.00	12	0.00‰	0.00
Halloween	2	0.00‰	0.00	126	0.05‰	11.51
Carnival	305	0.32‰	8.00	1,209	0.43‰	10.33
Feria de abril	0	0.00‰	0.00	8	0.00‰	25.00
Castellers	167	0.17‰	0.90	445	0.16‰	21.12
Correbou	4	0.00‰	0.00	1	0.00‰	0.00
Giants and Dwarfs	90	0.09‰	1.33	223	0.08‰	17.31
Correfoc	37	0.04‰	1.89	139	0.05‰	17.77
Fireworks	71	0.07‰	2.54	466	0.17‰	5.47
Siesta	1	0.00‰	0.00	650	0.23‰	5.52
Bullfighting	19	0.02‰	2.11	918	0.33‰	16.66
Sardana	78	0.08‰	10.38	244	0.09‰	28.28
Traditional Catalan dances	9	0.01‰	0.00	2	0.00‰	0.00
Accordionists	6	0.01‰	0.00	0	0.00‰	0.00
Flamenco	60	0.06‰	3.66	1,637	0.59‰	27.29
Spanish Guitar	20	0.02‰	8.00	418	0.15‰	4.95
Ballet	34	0.04‰	0.00	31	0.01‰	5.48
Belly dancing	0	0.00‰	0.00	1	0.00‰	0.00
Salsa	6	0.01‰	1.67	247	0.09‰	12.02

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

- Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music presence per file

In general, the means of cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music are low. Again we see that intangible culture is not strongly mentioned at all if compared to other types of culture or attraction factors. The analysis of the presence of cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music per file was divided into three subgroups of categories for it to be more comprehensible (see Table 3.38)

a) The first group of identity attraction factors refers to intangible heritage **traditions and events** (having specific dates).

In the previous section, “Religious traditions” and “Festa major” had similar site-wide densities. However, their average presence per file in table 3.38 shows different results. “Religious traditions” have a considerable mean of appearances (0.09) in the case of official

tourism websites, and a much lower mean in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.03). In this case, they both have a very high standard deviation, of 1.28 on official tourism websites and of 0.39 in travel blogs and reviews. In the case of official tourism websites the mean of mentions of “Festa major” is 0.04 per file, but the standard deviation is very high (0.38) meaning some files may be dedicated to this type of festivities while others do not mention them. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the mean is lower (0.01) but the standard deviation is even higher proportionally (0.33). These very high standard deviations indicate that neither the “religious traditions” nor the “festa major” are regularly mentioned among files but that they are highly mentioned in some specific files. Some files of official tourism websites may be dedicated to this type of events and some specific bloggers may be especially interested in them or have experienced them.

“Carnival” has a considerable average presence on official tourism websites (0.10) and about half such presence in travel blogs and reviews (0.05). We see that in both cases, the standard deviations are high (1.10) on official tourism websites and 0.61 in the case of travel blogs and reviews. This may be due to the fact that carnival is just mentioned by some specific files, and in the case of bloggers, perhaps it is mentioned in relation to some specific places.

“Sant Joan” has a very low mean of appearances both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. “Sant Jordi” is a little more mentioned on official tourism websites (0.06). However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, it is much less mentioned (0.01). “Rural/farming festivities”, “Aplec” and “Patum” have very low means in the case of official tourism websites, however they all have very high standard deviations, which indicates very specific concentrations of these elements in some files while the majority do not mention them. The “Castanyada”, “Saint Valentine”, “Halloween”, “Feria de Abril”, “Correbou”, “Traditional Catalan dances”, “Accordionists” and “Belly dancing” all have very low means in both types of files, lower than 0.01.

b) The second group of identity attraction factors of table 3.38 refers to folkloric elements and customs.

The “Siesta” and “bullfighting”, two traditions with a strong Spanish identity, are hardly mentioned on official tourism websites. “Siesta” in the case of travel blogs and reviews has 0.03 of average presence. Similarly “bullfighting” is hardly mentioned on official tourism websites (0.01) but is more mentioned in travel blogs and reviews (0.04). In this last case, the standard deviation is very high (0.59) indicating that although “bullfighting” is not an element mentioned in all blogs, in the ones it is, it is strongly present. Therefore, for some bloggers this is a very relevant element.

“Castellers” and “giants and dwarfs” are deep-rooted Catalan traditions. “Castellers” have low average mentions in general (0.05) on official tourism websites and even lower (0.02) in travel blogs and reviews. Similarly “giants and dwarfs” are little mentioned on average on official tourism websites (0.03) and less in travel blogs and reviews (0.01). However, in both cases, standard deviations are very high. Especially in travel blogs and reviews it seems that some specific bloggers mention these element of Catalan culture while the majority do not. Both “Correfocs” and “fireworks” have similar low average presence on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. In both cases, the “correfoc” has a mean of (0.01)

and “fireworks” of (0.02). Their standard deviations are high, indicating irregular presence among files.

All in all, the intangible traditions have very low average presence, especially Catalan traditions, within travel blogs and reviews.

Table 3.38
Descriptive statistics of cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music

Identity references	Official tourism websites (44,295 u.w.)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 u.w.)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Festa Major	124	0.04	0.38	0.14	355	0.01	0.33	0.11
Rural/Farming								
festivities	45	0.01	0.19	0.04	26	0.00	0.14	0.02
Aplec	44	0.01	0.16	0.03	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Patum	57	0.02	0.29	0.09	2	0.00	0.01	0.00
Fira del teatre	4	0.00	0.04	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tarraco viva	4	0.00	0.04	0.00	2	0.00	0.01	0.00
Religious traditions	293	0.09	1.28	1.64	780	0.03	0.39	0.15
Sant Joan	30	0.01	0.13	0.02	34	0.00	0.05	0.00
Sant Jordi	181	0.06	0.42	0.18	178	0.01	0.18	0.03
Castanyada	13	0.00	0.07	0.01	4	0.00	0.03	0.00
Saint valentine	1	0.00	0.02	0.00	12	0.00	0.02	0.00
Halloween	2	0.00	0.04	0.00	126	0.00	0.12	0.01
Carnival	305	0.10	1.10	1.22	1,209	0.05	0.61	0.37
Feria de abril	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	8	0.00	0.03	0.00
Castellers	167	0.05	0.67	0.44	445	0.02	0.38	0.14
Correbou	4	0.00	0.04	0.00	1	0.00	0.01	0.00
Giants and dwarfs	90	0.03	0.32	0.10	223	0.01	0.31	0.10
Correfoc	37	0.01	0.18	0.03	139	0.01	0.20	0.04
Fireworks	71	0.02	0.44	0.19	466	0.02	0.28	0.08
Siesta	1	0.00	0.02	0.00	650	0.03	0.21	0.04
Bullfighting	19	0.01	0.12	0.02	918	0.04	0.59	0.35
Sardana	78	0.02	0.27	0.07	244	0.01	0.23	0.05
Traditional Catalan								
dances	9	0.00	0.07	0.01	2	0.00	0.01	0.00
Accordionists	6	0.00	0.05	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Flamenco	60	0.02	0.38	0.15	1,637	0.06	0.57	0.32
Spanish Guitar	20	0.01	0.18	0.03	418	0.02	0.19	0.04
Ballet	34	0.01	0.42	0.18	31	0.00	0.08	0.01
Belly dancing	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	0.00	0.01	0.00
Salsa	6	0.00	0.04	0.00	247	0.01	0.19	0.04

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

c) The third group of identity attraction factors refers to specific **dances and music**. As shown in Table 3.38, again Catalan dances are hardly mentioned and have especially low means in travel blogs and reviews.

The Catalan dance, the “Sardana”, is very weakly mentioned in both official tourism websites (0.02) and travel blogs and reviews (0.01). Again their standard deviations are high, 0.27 and 0.23 respectively. This means that although it is hardly mentioned, when it is, it is mentioned considerably.

“Flamenco” is also weakly mentioned by official tourism websites (0.02) but it is remarkably more mentioned by travel blogs and reviews (0.06). In the first case, the standard deviation is 0.38, very high, meaning it is very irregularly spread. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the standard deviation is 0.57. Although it is a high deviation, proportionally, it is less deviated than in the case of official tourism websites. This means that it is irregularly spread among files but that a considerable number of them mention it and that it appears much more regularly.

3.2.1.4.3. *Cuisine and drinks*

- Cuisine and drinks with reference to the total database

These categories of cuisine and drinks have been subdivided into two groups. The first group refers to food dishes and the second group to drinks. The results are shown in table 3.39.

a) Regarding **food dishes** we observe that “Seafood and fish”, typical Catalan and Mediterranean cuisine elements, are similarly mentioned in both official tourism websites (1.21‰) and travel blogs and reviews (1.16‰). In fact, seafood and fish is by far the most widely mentioned type of food when talking about Catalonia by both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. Hence it can be considered a symbol of the culinary Catalan and Mediterranean identity image.

However, “olive oil”, again so characteristic of Mediterranean cuisine and famous for its health benefits, is much more mentioned on official tourism websites (0.81‰) than in travel blogs and reviews (0.17‰). Although it is much more valued by official sites, the density this element has in travel blogs and reviews is also remarkable.

After these, come foods and dishes related to Spanish cultural identity, or usually identified with Spain. The “Paella” is, along with “Tapas”, probably the most internationally well-known Spanish dish. “Tapas” are mentioned very little by official tourism websites, 0.06‰, but for travel blogs and reviews, remarkably, they are the most mentioned type of food of all, 1.45‰. “Tapas” have a very strong Spanish identity and, as results show that for bloggers this is the type of food more identified with Catalonia despite conveying a strong Spanish identity. Similarly, “Paella”, has a very high density (0.53‰) in travel blogs and reviews, about 10 times higher than on official tourism websites (0.05‰). Other Spanish dishes such as “Spanish tortilla”, “embotit” (including ham), “churros” and “gazpacho” are also considerably more mentioned in travel blogs and reviews than on official tourism websites, where these elements are hardly mentioned.

It is also remarkable that “international fast food” is mentioned about 4 times more in travel blogs and reviews (0.83‰) than on official tourism websites (0.24‰). European food and Asian food are also hardly mentioned within official tourism websites but are relatively dense in travel blogs and reviews.

Conversely, in general, traditional Catalan dishes or food products, such as meat dishes, traditional Catalan sausages, traditional Catalan soups, Catalan mixed vegetables and Catalan protected origin vegetables, Catalan sauces, Catalan pastries, calçots, and bunyols are remarkably more present on official tourism websites than in travel blogs and reviews,

where they are hardly mentioned. The low rate at which tourists mention some of these products could be due to their seasonality (calçots, wild mushrooms, snails, etc.) or to their scarce knowledge of them. For example “Mushrooms” have a density of 0.32‰ on official tourism websites and of 0.07‰ in travel blogs and reviews. Again, we observe that although traditional or autochthonous products are promoted by official sites, bloggers do not mention them so much, either because they do not value them so much or because they simply do not get to know them.

The only Catalan traditional specialties which are more or less mentioned similarly in both types of websites are “Bread with tomato”, one of the most symbolic and traditional Catalan dishes which has a density of 0.03‰ in both cases, and also the “Catalan desserts”, such as Crema Catalana, which have a density of 0.05‰ in the case of official tourism websites and of 0.03‰ in the case of travel blogs and reviews. However, these densities are quite low if compared to other types of dishes.

Different types of “nuts” are cultivated in Catalonia and are also traditional autochthonous foods. In this case, although the density is higher on official tourism websites (0.14‰), they also have a relatively high density in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.11‰). However, fresh fruit and vegetables are mentioned very little 0.01‰ on the official tourism websites while they are mentioned quite importantly in travel blogs and reviews (0.09‰). This shows that although official sites do not promote these elements very much, they are highly valued by bloggers.

Catalonia has several internationally recognized cooks. These “famous Catalan cooks” are intensely promoted by the official tourism websites (0.015‰) but are almost inexistent in the texts posted by bloggers and reviewers (0.01‰). This suggests that bloggers either do not know them or are not interested in this type of *haute cuisine*.

All in all, it is remarkable that for blogs and reviews the densest dish of all is “tapas” conveying a very strong Spanish identity followed by “International fast food” conveying a global identity. In general we see that official tourism websites more strongly promote Catalan foods and dishes and that bloggers make a stronger mention of Spanish dishes and international cuisine.

b) The second group gathers some **drinks**. Wine, which has an autochthonous identity, is the most mentioned drink of all in both cases, followed by “beer” and “Spanish popular drinks” in the case of travel blogs and reviews.

“Cava” which is the Catalan version of champagne, is promoted more on official tourism websites (0.53‰) than in travel blogs and reviews (0.35‰). “Champagne” is much less mentioned on official tourism websites (0.02‰) than in travel blogs and reviews. However, this time the Catalan version of the product (cava) is mentioned three times more by bloggers. “Wine” can also be considered a Catalan drink and tradition although it is spread in many regions. “Wine” is also about as twice as dense on official tourism websites (2.00‰) as in travel blogs and reviews (1.07‰).

Then comes the group of “Spanish popular drinks” such as (sangria). In this case these drinks are inexistent on official tourism websites but notably popular in travel blogs and reviews (0.62‰). Similarly, international alcoholic drinks such as “beer” and “spirits” are especially mentioned by bloggers and not by official tourism websites. “Beer” has a density of 0.88‰ and “spirits” a density of 0.21‰ in travel blogs and reviews. Both international refreshments and fruit drinks are almost non-existent on official tourism websites and are more mentioned in travel blogs and reviews.

Table 3.39

References to specific cuisine and drinks with different cultural origins

Attraction factor	Official tourism websites			Travel blogs and reviews		
	Count	Density	Weight	Count	Density	Weight
Bread with tomato	31	0.03‰	10.97	81	0.03‰	5.31
Olive oil	786	0.81‰	9.09	474	0.17‰	3.31
Seafood and fish	1,165	1.21‰	5.68	3,227	1.16‰	7.84
Catalan meat dishes	129	0.13‰	5.66	73	0.03‰	3.56
Catalan sausages	39	0.04‰	1.80	6	0.00‰	6.67
Catalan soups	31	0.03‰	6.77	1	0.00‰	20.00
Catalan mixed vegetables	39	0.04‰	13.85	3	0.00‰	6.67
Catalan protected origin vegetables	35	0.04‰	4.86	20	0.01‰	15.00
Catalan sauces	171	0.18‰	7.89	36	0.01‰	13.61
Catalan pastries	148	0.15‰	11.42	26	0.01‰	22.31
Catalan desserts	47	0.05‰	21.70	81	0.03‰	8.40
Calçots	81	0.08‰	6.18	21	0.01‰	20.00
Mushrooms	306	0.32‰	7.03	186	0.07‰	11.29
Bunyols	6	0.01‰	3.33	5	0.00‰	2.00
Snails	89	0.09‰	5.06	110	0.04‰	8.27
Nuts	134	0.14‰	6.57	320	0.11‰	6.37
Fresh fruit and veg	6	0.01‰	0.00	239	0.09‰	6.36
Famous Catalan Cooks	143	0.15‰	0.07	15	0.01‰	8.67
Paella	49	0.05‰	10.21	1,491	0.53‰	11.54
Tapas	57	0.06‰	3.51	4,062	1.45‰	8.16
Spanish tortilla	30	0.03‰	9.67	282	0.10‰	5.25
Embotit	63	0.07‰	5.08	914	0.33‰	7.58
Gazpacho	4	0.00‰	2.50	87	0.03‰	8.74
Churro	2	0.00‰	5.00	320	0.11‰	10.38
Breads	160	0.17‰	9.06	1,084	0.39‰	6.27
International fast food	235	0.24‰	9.11	2,316	0.83‰	3.34
European food	36	0.04‰	10.56	581	0.21‰	5.06
Asian food	3	0.00‰	6.67	387	0.14‰	6.49
Cava	513	0.53‰	9.73	969	0.35‰	16.69
Winery	1,935	2.00‰	6.49	2,998	1.07‰	6.50
Spanish popular drinks	1	0.00‰	0.00	1,719	0.62‰	9.43
Champagne	15	0.02‰	1.33	302	0.11‰	3.84
Beer	27	0.03‰	8.89	2,457	0.88‰	6.15
Spirits	16	0.02‰	3.75	586	0.21‰	7.54
International refreshments	14	0.01‰	0.00	324	0.12‰	5.50
Fruit drinks	7	0.01‰	0.00	213	0.08‰	3.47

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

- Cuisine and drinks presence per file

These categories of cuisine and drinks have been subdivided into two groups. The first group refers to food dishes and the second group to drinks. The results are shown in table 3.40.

a) Regarding cuisine or **food dishes**, “Seafood and fish” have considerably high means in both cases. In the case of official tourism websites, this mean is of 0.37, and in the case of official tourism websites, of 0.13. The standard deviation is proportionally high in the case of official tourism websites (2.46). This means that in the case of travel blogs and reviews this element is more regularly spread among files than in the case of official tourism websites, denoting a consolidation in image. However, “olive oil” has a considerably high mean in the case of official tourism websites (0.25) while in the case of travel blogs and reviews this mean is very low (0.02). Nevertheless, the standard deviation in this last case (0.21) indicates that for some specific bloggers this element is worth mentioning.

Foods more related with Spanish identity such as “Paella” and “tapas” have low average mentions on official tourism website files (0.02 both of them). However, in the case of bloggers, “paella” has a mean of 0.06 and “tapas” a remarkable 0.16. Especially in the case of “tapas”, in travel blogs and reviews we observe that the standard deviation (0.76) is not very high, meaning that bloggers quite often mention tapas and that this element is spread among a good number of blog entries. “Embotit”, or cold meat platters, is more mentioned in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.04) if compared to official tourism websites (0.02).

“Bread with tomato” has a very low mean in both cases, which may be worrying as it is one of the national foods of Catalonia. Some other traditional Catalan food elements have a low average presence on official tourism websites: Catalan meat dishes (0.04), Catalan sausages (0.01), Catalan soups (0.01), Catalan mixed vegetables (0.01), Catalan protected origin vegetables (0.01), Catalan sauces (0.05), Catalan pastries (0.05), Catalan desserts (0.02), snails (0.03) and calçots (0.03) have means lower than 0.01 in travel blogs and reviews, meaning they are not elements that belong to the image transmitted by tourists. The same happens with famous Catalan cooks, who have a mean of (0.05) on official tourism websites but are almost inexistent in travel blogs and reviews.

Ingredients such as “mushrooms” are especially promoted on official tourism websites (0.10) but instead have a very low mean in the case of travel blogs and reviews. Moreover, the standard deviation of mushrooms on official tourism websites is very high (1.56), meaning that some specific files mention them a lot while the majority do not. Similarly, “nuts” have also a higher mean in the case of official tourism websites (0.14) than in the case of travel blogs and reviews (0.04). Conversely, “Fresh fruit and vegetables” have a higher mean in travel blogs and reviews.

“Breads” are more or less equally mentioned on official tourism websites (0.05) and travel blogs and reviews (0.04). In spite of this, it is remarkable that the standard deviation in the case of official tourism websites (0.63) doubles that of travel blogs and reviews (0.04), meaning that the distribution of this element is very irregular and that just a few files mention different types of breads, while the great majority do not.

“International fast food” has considerably high means in both types of files: 0.08 on official tourism websites and 0.09 in travel blogs and reviews. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the standard deviation is quite low (0.47) meaning that the mentions of fast food are quite regular among files. This result is different from that obtained through site-wide densities since in that case, the density of fast food was much higher in travel blogs and reviews. Foreign foods such as “European foods” or “Asian foods” are hardly mentioned on official tourism websites and only slightly more in travel blogs and reviews.

Table 3.40
Descriptive statistics of cuisine and drinks

Identity references	Official tourism websites (44,295 u.w.)				Travel blogs and reviews (76,618 u.w.)			
	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Sum (Word count)	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Bread with tomato	31	0.01	0.11	0.01	81	0.00	0.07	0.01
Olive oil	786	0.25	2.31	5.33	474	0.02	0.21	0.05
Seafood and fish	1,165	0.37	2.46	6.07	3,227	0.13	0.68	0.46
Catalan meat dishes	129	0.04	0.38	0.15	73	0.00	0.06	0.00
Catalan sausages	39	0.01	0.23	0.05	6	0.00	0.02	0.00
Catalan soups	31	0.01	0.12	0.01	1	0.00	0.01	0.00
Catalan mixed vegetables	39	0.01	0.15	0.02	3	0.00	0.01	0.00
Catalan protected origin vegetables	35	0.01	0.32	0.11	20	0.00	0.04	0.00
Catalan sauces	171	0.05	0.60	0.36	36	0.00	0.08	0.01
Catalan pastries	148	0.05	0.61	0.37	26	0.00	0.06	0.00
Catalan desserts	47	0.02	0.16	0.03	72	0.00	0.07	0.01
Calçots	81	0.03	0.35	0.12	21	0.00	0.05	0.00
Mushrooms	306	0.10	1.56	2.44	186	0.01	0.13	0.02
Bunyols	6	0.00	0.05	0.00	5	0.00	0.02	0.00
Snails	89	0.03	0.26	0.07	110	0.00	0.12	0.01
Nuts	134	0.04	0.37	0.14	320	0.01	0.14	0.02
Fresh fruit and veg	6	0.00	0.04	0.00	239	0.01	0.12	0.01
Famous Catalan cooks	143	0.05	0.56	0.31	15	0.00	0.04	0.00
Paella	49	0.02	0.18	0.03	1,491	0.06	0.43	0.19
Tapas	57	0.02	0.22	0.05	4,062	0.16	0.76	0.57
Spanish tortilla	30	0.01	0.15	0.02	282	0.01	0.18	0.03
Embotit	63	0.02	0.48	0.23	914	0.04	0.35	0.12
Gazpacho	4	0.00	0.04	0.00	87	0.00	0.08	0.01
Churro	2	0.00	0.03	0.00	320	0.01	0.21	0.04
Breads	160	0.05	0.63	0.40	1,084	0.04	0.31	0.10
International fast food	235	0.08	0.68	0.46	2,316	0.09	0.47	0.22
European food	36	0.01	0.13	0.02	581	0.02	0.20	0.04
Asian food	3	0.00	0.03	0.00	387	0.02	0.19	0.04
Cava	513	0.16	1.59	2.51	969	0.04	0.71	0.51
Wine	1,935	0.62	5.58	31.10	2,998	0.12	0.78	0.60
Spanish popular drinks	1	0.00	0.02	0.00	1,719	0.07	0.42	0.18
Champagne	15	0.00	0.08	0.01	302	0.01	0.17	0.03
Beer	27	0.01	0.14	0.02	2,457	0.10	0.55	0.30
Spirits	16	0.01	0.09	0.01	586	0.02	0.26	0.07
International refreshments	14	0.00	0.15	0.02	324	0.01	0.17	0.03
Fruit drinks	7	0.00	0.05	0.00	213	0.01	0.12	0.01

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

In general, results per file support the results obtained for the whole databases. Catalan dishes are more promoted by official tourism websites while dishes associated with Spanish identity are more mentioned by travel blogs and reviews. Distributions of food elements are usually very irregular.

b) Regarding **drinks**, we observe that “cava” and “wine”, two traditional Catalan products, are mentioned much more on average in official tourism files than in travel blogs and reviews.

Regarding “cava”, we observe that it has a considerable mean of 0.16 times per file and a high standard deviation (1.59), indicating the irregular distribution of this element among files. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, it is mentioned 4 times less on average (0.04) despite having a very high standard deviation (0.71), which indicates that some specific bloggers or blogs about some specific regions mention this element a lot. “Wine” has a very high mean on official tourism websites (0.62), whereas in the case of travel blogs and reviews this mean is about 5 times lower (0.12).

“Spanish popular drinks” and “Champagne” are hardly mentioned by official tourism websites while in travel blogs and reviews they have an average presence of 0.07 (Spanish popular drinks) and of 0.01 (champagne). Similarly, “beer” and “spirits” are hardly mentioned on average on official tourism websites (0.01). But, in the case of travel blogs and reviews they have higher means of 0.10, in the case of “beer”, and of 0.02, in the case of “spirits”. “International refreshments” and “fruit drinks” are almost inexistent on official tourism websites while in the case of bloggers they have low average mentions (0.01).

3.2.1.4.4. Correlations between cultural identity elements

In this section, first we shall see in general if there are strong correlations between the major cultural identity references (Catalan, Spanish, Mediterranean, European, Global) and other elements referring to traditions, events, folklore, dances and music, cuisine and drinks, etc. on both official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. Correlations in the case of official tourism websites are in general much stronger than in the case of travel blogs and reviews.

It must be noted that a table displaying these correlations is not displayed as it is too large to fit in the body of this paper. The most significant correlations will be explained.

- Catalan cultural and geographic identity

In the case of **official tourism websites**, the strongest correlations of the different identity references and cultural elements are found with Catalan identity. The elements that are most strongly correlated with it are: the “Famous Catalan cooks” (0.652), the “Patum” (0.546), “Cava” (0.437), “wine” (0.435) and “Castellers” 0.400, “Catalan soups” (0.362) and “festa major” (0.338). As can be observed among the words most correlated with Catalan identity on official tourism websites, we find two traditional Catalan festivities, two elements related with Catalan cuisine, two elements related with traditional Catalan drinks, and one Catalan traditional folkloric element.

Other elements which show their strongest correlations with the Catalan identity (above 0.200) are: the “Sant Jordi” festivity, the “Castanyada” celebration, “Giants and Dwarfs”, “correfoc”, “sardana”*, “accordionists”, “flamenco”, “Spanish guitar”, “olive oil”, “Catalan meat dishes”, “Catalan sauces”, “Catalan mixed vegetables”, “Catalan pastries”, “Calçots”, “bunyols”, “snails”, “nuts”, “breads”, “international fast food” and “beer”. All these elements are what could be called the symbols of Catalan identity, according to official tourism website mentions. We can observe that many of the elements belonging clearly to Catalan cultural identity, however some of the elements most related to this identity were not expected: these are especially flamenco and the Spanish guitar, which convey a clearly Spanish identity and elements such as international fast food and beer, which have a global international identity. *Sardana has been included in this group despite having a stronger but almost equal correlation to Mediterranean identity.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, no strong correlations above 0.100 are found of any element to Catalan cultural identity. The most prominent correlations of elements having their strongest correlations with Catalan identity are “castellers” (0.086), “fireworks” (0.074) and “Festa Major” (0.072). The element of “Sant Jordi”, with a correlation of 0.047, is worth mentioning as it is not significantly correlated to any of the other identities, just the Catalan. As can be observed, all of these elements are related to traditions, celebrations and folkloric elements. It should be noted that “Castellers” and “Sant Jordi” have prominent Catalan identity, but “fireworks” and “festa major”, despite having Catalan identity also convey Spanish and International identity. These weak correlations indicate that probably elements conveying Catalan identity are not related to this cultural identity by bloggers or, simply, that Catalan identity is much less mentioned and therefore identity elements are much less correlated to it.

All in all, despite Catalan identity being clearly prominent and related to several cultural identity elements in the case of official tourism websites, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, no strong correlations are found from which the weakness of this identity within tourists’ accounts can be identified.

- Spanish cultural and geographical identity

The elements most strongly correlated to Spanish cultural identity by **official tourism websites** are: “siesta” (0.302), “tapas” (0.299), “Asian food” (0.208) and “champagne” (0.257). Other elements, despite having correlations lower than 0.200, have their strongest correlation to Spanish identity: “Tarraco viva”, “bullfighting”, “churro”, “gazpacho”, “embotit” and “Spanish popular drinks”. In general, we observe among these elements clear conveyors of Spanish identity such as siesta, tapas, bullfighting, Spanish popular drinks, etc. However, we find some unexpected elements such as “Asian food” conveying a global identity, and “Tarraco viva” as a Catalan festival.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the elements most strongly correlated to Spanish identity are: “tapas” (0.223), “international fast food (0.192), “siesta” (0.182), “embotit” (0.174), “seafood and fish” (0.172), Beer (0.171), “paella” (0.165), “Spanish popular drinks” and “winery” (0.160). Other elements hat correlated more than 0.100 are “carnival”, and “olive oil”, “Spanish tortilla”, “breads” and “European food”. Some of the elements

correlated to Spanish identity were clearly expected to convey this identity (tapas, siesta, paella, embotit and Spanish tortilla). However, other elements that are more strongly correlated to Spanish identity were expected to have a more Mediterranean identity: seafood and fish, winery and olive oil, as well as some elements with a clear European or global identity, such as carnival, breads, international fast food or European food.

- Mediterranean cultural and geographical identity:

The elements most strongly correlated to Mediterranean identity in the case of official tourism websites are: “Seafood and fish” (0.338), “sardana” (0.296), “bread with tomato” (0.231), “fresh fruit and vegetables” (0.221). And other elements most strongly correlated above 0.100 are: “Halloween”, “fireworks”, “Paella”, “European food” and “international refreshments”. Again, most elements within this group convey Mediterranean identity, however the “Sardana”, the national dance of Catalonia, and “bread with tomato”, the national food of Catalonia, stand out for being related more to the Mediterranean than to Catalonia. Similarly, “paella” was expected to be more related to Spanish identity as it is an international symbol of Spain.

In travel blog and review entries, no elements have Mediterranean identity as their strongest correlated identity. The only element having a relatively high (but not the highest) correlation with this identity is “seafood and fish” (0.97).

- European and global cultural and geographical identity:

It is surprising that the only element most strongly correlated to European identity are “traditional Catalan dances”, which in theory should convey Catalan identity. It is also remarkable that the “Famous Catalan cooks” have a very strong correlation with global identity (0.608), similar to their Catalan identity, indicating their international projection, according to official tourism websites.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, very few elements relate most strongly to these identities. The only exception to this is: “Tarraco Viva” which is most strongly correlated to global identity (0.149).

3.2.1.4.5. Zoom into Catalan language as a symbol of identity

In this section, we zoomed into a specific and fundamental element of Catalan culture: the Catalan language. This element is probably the one conveying the strongest distinctive Catalan cultural identity. This section specially focuses on the bloggers’ view of the language but also gives an insight to the presence and description of the language by official tourism websites for comparison.

Studying this aspect in detail on a small scale can help us understand the way bloggers understand Catalan language and thus, what they perceive and transmit through travel blogs and reviews. A sample of 100 blogs containing references to the Catalan language was studied.

With the specific issue of Catalan language, semantic text groups were created inductively. The researcher looked for themes related to specific issues. We wanted to see exactly what is said about the Catalan language and other cultural identity elements. We checked one by one the entries where the word “Catalan” appeared in combination with words referring to the language (language, writ, underst, spoke, etc.) and classified the comments into categories. In this case, the process was inductive, and categories arose from what we found in text.

To look for sentences which speak about the Catalan language among the files we used the ‘Actual Search & Replace’ programme and in this case we set the programme to find by means of Regular Expression

- Case sensitive: Off (match capital letter and lower case)
- “.” Matches line separators too: Off (inside the same paragraph)
- ((Catalan\W)+.*?(language|dialect|spoke|speak|writ|underst)+)|
- ((language|dialect|speak|spoke|writ|underst)+.*?(Catalan\W)+)

That is to say, it searches for paragraphs in which “Catalan” (whole word) appears and where one of the cited words (or one of their endings) appears at the same time.

By the means set out above we selected the sentences speaking about Catalan language and could then analyse the following categories:

- Descriptions or comments about Catalan language. Polarity connotations were analysed: positive, negative, neutral, strangeness and problematic.
 - Definitions of Catalan language in relation to other languages: in this case we selected a sample of blog entries where the Catalan language was defined.
- Description of Catalan language (positive/negative)

Once the sentences containing the Catalan language were found, they were semantically analysed, one by one, in terms of the sense in which bloggers and reviewers describe it (positive, negative...) and the results were classified into a table where the most common impressions or feelings about the language were noted, as shown in Table 3.41:

Table 3.41
Semantic analysis of some sentences describing the Catalan language

Impression	Adjectives/syntagms	count
positive	amazing experience; pretty; beautiful; good; I love; lovely; interesting; ...	12
negative	baffling; confusing; pointless; frustrating; too bad; unfortunately; a big pain ...	7
neutral	common/official/first/own language; different/Spanish/local dialect; they/everyone speak/s Catalan; they speak and write a lot of Catalan; ...	51
strangeness	strange; weird; odd; discover; disoriented; struck me; ...	15
problematic	I barely recognize; difficult; hard to understand; problems understanding; ...	15

Source: Random sample of 100 of the 483 blog entries commenting on the Catalan language

Database: 25,357 blog entries in English

- 51% of these sentences only ascertain or confirm the existence of the language, without commenting on it or making any judgements, being neutral about it.
- 12% of these sentences speak positively about the Catalan language, usually by describing it with good feelings or positive adjectives.

- It is remarkable that 7% of all the sentences have a very negative impression of the Catalan language, and criticize or ascribe to it negative feelings and adjectives.
- 15% of the blogs manifest the strangeness of the language and usually express their surprise at it (most of them did not know it existed).
- Another 15% of the sampled blogs consider it to be problematic because of the difficulties to understand it.

- Relationship of the Catalan language to other Romance languages

Another interesting aspect to analyse is to which other Romance languages Catalan is compared and in what sense bloggers think Catalan is related to them. This shows the degree of knowledge of the Catalan language and the vision bloggers have of it.

The results show that one half of the sample shown in table 3.42 describes Catalan as related to other better-known languages.

- 37 blogs consider it a mixture of other languages
- 10 blogs see it as being different from Spanish
- 3 define it correctly as a Romance language or as evolved from Latin.

Table 3.42

Semantic analysis of some sentences that relate the Catalan language to other Romance languages

Predicate	count	es	fr	pt	it	ar	la *
a mix/mixture of/between	18	18	18	3	5	-	1
a combo/combination of	4	4	4	-	-	1	-
a strange/odd/weird mix/mixture of/between	4	4	4	-	-	-	-
a hybrid/cross of/between	3	3	3	-	-	-	-
an/a interesting/good mix/mixture of	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
a baffling/crazy fusion/mixture of	2	2	2	-	1	-	-
a very interesting mix between	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
a strange and pointless mixture of	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
has lots of similarities to	1	-	1	1	-	-	-
their own local dialect and a pinch of	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
evolved from	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
a Romance language quite unlike/, not	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
a fairly/completely/Ø different language to	10	10	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Random sample of 100 of the 483 blog entries commenting on the Catalan language

Database: 25,357 blog entries in English

*xx: Standard two-letter language codes (ISO 639-1)

In general, we observe a clear misunderstanding and scarce knowledge about the Catalan language. It is remarkable that some travellers are surprised, and even annoyed, to find a language different from Spanish. This confirms the scarce presence in general of Catalan identity elements and mentions within travel blogs and reviews.

The Catalan language is probably the most fundamental sign of Catalan cultural identity. However, the scarce presence of this language and the way it is presented show that bloggers have a biased view of it.

Moreover, the presence of the Catalan language on official tourism websites is scarce too. The Catalan language should be intensely promoted and explained as a symbol of Catalan cultural identity, but instead the OTW files which mention it only confirm the existence of an autochthonous language, and little else:

- Catalonia is a Mediterranean country, with a history of more than a thousand years and its own culture and language (Press Pack 2010, Catalan Tourist Board).

- Catalonia is a Mediterranean destination with a millenary history, its own culture and language and a wealthy historical and natural heritage (Press Pack 2012, Catalan Tourist Board).

- Catalonia is a small country of six million inhabitants but it has more than a thousand years of history and a culture and language of its own which have forged a very distinct character (Welcome to Catalonia: http://www.gencat.cat/turistex_nou/benvinguts/angl1.htm).

Only one of the official tourism websites under study has a page which gives practical information about Catalonia with a minimal explanation about the Catalan language:

- Catalonia's own language is Catalan, a Romance language which has co-official status alongside Castilian (Spanish). Catalan literature, though affected by the political and cultural vicissitudes of the country's history, boasts outstanding prose writers and chroniclers - Ramon Llull, Ramon Muntaner, Josep Pla-, magnificent poets -Ausàs Marc, Jacint Verdaguer, Joan Maragall, Josep Carner, J.V. Foix- and gifted novelists -Joanot Martorell, Narcís Oller, Mercè Rodoreda.

http://www.gencat.cat/turistex_nou/basiques04.htm

However, this last page is an exception. Therefore, if not even official tourism websites promote and explain it, it is no wonder that bloggers and reviewers have an inaccurate view or a total lack of knowledge of it. We should wonder why the official tourism websites do not broadcast and promote more the fact that Catalonia has its own language, since it is a fundamental symbol of cultural identity. Could it perhaps be so as not to frighten tourists with the presence of an unknown language?

3.2.1.5. Relationship between brands and categories

In this section the brands, in the form of categories, were related to other categories and subcategories. In this case what we consider a brand comprises the mentioning of the name of the brand and all the towns and cities within it. It should be noted that these categories of brands are different from the brands in the next section where travel blogs and reviews are classified by brands or geographical locations by the same bloggers.

3.2.1.5.1. Correlations between brands and categories

In this section, the 12 strongest correlations of each brand with the other categories were identified (see Table 3.43) both within official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews to include the most significant or explicative categories of the brands. This measure was useful to give us a summary of the relationships between the appearances of the names of

the brands and their towns, and the other categories. It must be noted that all correlations presented here are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3.43

Correlations among brands and categories

BRAND	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS
Barna	1. New/fashionable (0.818) 2. Culture remaining words (0.784) 3. Cheap (0.756) 4. Catalan (0.747) 5. Urban environment (0.712) 6. History/industrial (0.696) 7. Authentic (0.696) 8. Leisure and recreational activities (0.695) 9. Leisure remaining words (0.690) 10. shopping (0.673) 11. orderly (0.670) 12. Barcelona attractions (0.666)	1. Tangible Heritage (0.368) 2. Urban Environment (0.347) 3. Gaudí (0.316) 4. Spanish (0.315) 5. Buildings and architecture (0.303) 6. Good feelings (0.300) 7. Barcelona attractions (0.286) 8. Urban tourism/general sites (0.280) 9. Bad feelings (0.253) 10. Food and Drinks (0.242) 11. Food and Wine (0.226) 12. Art, design, art styles (0.226)
CatCe	1. Old/old-fashioned (0.580) 2. Tangible heritage (0.550) 3. History/industrial (0.532) 4. Urban tourism/general sites (0.521) 5. Art, design, art styles (0.521) 6. Buildings and architecture (0.512) 7. Authentic (0.507) 8. Good feelings (0.504) 9. Religious heritage (0.499) 10. Monuments/sculptures (0.495) 11. Luxurious/wealthy (0.494) 12. Urban environment (0.493)	1. History/industrial (0.081) 2. Nature elements and places (0.056) 3. Nature and active tourism (0.054) 4. Old/old-fashioned (0.053) 5. Religious heritage (0.041) 6. Shopping (0.037) 7. Sant Jordi (0.030) 8. Food and Drinks (0.029) 9. Quiet (0.029) 10. Catalan (0.028) 11. Food and Wine (0.027) 12. Nature sports and active tourism (0.027)
cBarc	1. Old/old-fashioned (0.595) 2. Catalan (0.586) 3. Leisure remaining words (0.565) 4. Barna (0.564) 5. Good feelings (0.560) 6. Culture remaining words (0.553) 7. Urban environment (0.550) 8. Sun, sea, sand (0.548) 9. History/industrial (0.546) 10. Urban tourism/general sites (0.545) 11. New/fashionable(0.537) 12. Tangible heritage (0.534)	1. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.207) 2. Festa Major (0.161) 3. Carnival (0.131) 4. Wine (0.129) 5. Food and Wine (0.115) 6. Intangible Heritage (0.109) 7. Global (0.092) 8. Food and Drinks (0.075) 9. Mediterranean (0.073) 10. Culture remaining words (0.065) 11. Old/old-fashioned (0.061) 12./13. Leisure and recreational activities (0.059) 12./13. Theatres/spectacles/cinemas/music (0.059)
cBrav	1. Pyren (0.603) 2. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.588) 3. History/industrial (0.551) 4. Other city attractions (0.551) 5. Nature remaining words (0.526) 6. Good feelings (0.516) 7. Quiet (0.506) 8. Authentic (0.504) 9. Leisure remaining words (0.496) 10. Old/old-fashioned (0.496) 11. Nature and active tourism (0.489) 12. Military/castles (0.481)	1. Old/old-fashioned (0.187) 2. Artists (0.173) 3. Other city attractions (0.146) 4. Archaeological sites (0.136) 5. Unpleasant (0.119) 6. Museums (0.103) 7. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.095) 8. Spanish (0.095) 9. History/industrial (0.091) 10. Love (0.078) 11. Military/castles (0.077) 12. Nature and active tourism (0.074)

cDaur	1. Other city attractions (0.546) 2. Good feelings (0.523) 3. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.518) 4. Theme Parks (0.516) 5. Archaeological sites (0.506) 6. Old/old-fashioned (0.503) 7. Leisure remaining words (0.501) 8. Catalan (0.501) 9. Leisure and recreational activities (0.497) 10. Intangible Heritage (0.490) 11. History/industrial (0.488) 12. Tangible heritage (0.473)	1. Archaeological sites (0.284) 2. Other city attractions (0.138) 3. Tarraco viva (0.138) 4. Theme Parks (0.110) 5. Old/old-fashioned (0.100) 6. Mediterranean (0.090) 7. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.084) 8. tllel (0.077) 9. Intangible Heritage (0.074) 10. Art, design, art styles (0.073) 11. Leisure and recreational activities (0.071) 12. History/industrial (0.069)
Pyren	1. Nature elements and places (0.641) 2. Nature and active tourism (0.615) 3. cbrav (0.603) 4. Nature remaining words (0.554) 5. Good feelings (0.544) 6. History/industrial (0.528) 7. Military/castles (0.518) 8. Authentic (0.498) 9. Religious heritage (0.483) 10. Old/old-fashioned (0.470) 11. Rural landscape (0.468) 12. Love (0.453)	1. Nature elements and places (0.199) 2. Nature and active tourism (0.183) 3. Tllel (0.160) 4. Rural landscape (0.092) 5. History/industrial (0.084) 6. Catalan (0.074) 7. Nature sports and active tourism (0.051) 8. Other sports (0.044) 9. Beautiful (0.038) 10. Nature remaining words (0.035) 11. Urban tourism/general sites (0.032) 12. Religious heritage (0.029)
tEbre	1. Sant Jordi (0.394) 2. Nature elements and places (0.361) 3. CDaur (0.358) 4. Nature and active tourism (0.352) 5. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.347) 6. Good feelings (0.336) 7. Mediterranean (0.335) 8. Nature remaining words (0.329) 9. Old/old-fashioned (0.327) 10. History/industrial (0.314) 11. Archaeological sites (0.310) 12. Intangible Heritage (0.303)	1. Nature elements and places (0.074) 2. Nature and active tourism (0.073) 3. Cbrav (0.066) 4. Unpleasant (0.051) 5. Military/castles (0.042) 6. Love (0.037) 7. CDaur (0.032) 8. Rural landscape (0.031) 9. Nature remaining words (0.031) 10. Catalan (0.030) 11. Leisure remaining words (0.024) 12. History/industrial (0.023)
tLlei	1. Bad feelings (0.457) 2. Rural landscape (0.454) 3. Sun, Sea, Sand (0.397) 4. Art, design, art styles (0.395) 5. Expensive (0.380) 6. European (0.378) 7. Culture remaining words (0.375) 8. Barna (0.373) 9. Empty (0.373) 10. Aplec (0.364) 11. Noisy (0.354) 12. Distress (0.351)	1. Pyren (0.160) 2. CDaur (0.077) 3. Religious heritage (0.077) 4. Quiet (0.069) 5. Rural landscape (0.063) 6. History/industrial (0.058) 7. New/Fashionable (0.050) 8. Nature and active tourism (0.034) 9. Catalan (0.031) 10. Spanish (0.029) 11. Other sports (0.028) 12. Nature elements and places (0.027)

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

In general, we observe that the correlations with brand categories are stronger in the case of official tourism websites. If a brand category is correlated to a certain attraction factor, feeling, adjective or identity reference, this means that the brand name, its towns and cities appear jointly with these elements in the same file. The more coincident the appearances, the stronger the correlation.

- Barcelona (Barna)

Surprisingly, as shown in Table 3.43, not many of the 12 elements are coincidentally correlated to Barcelona on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. The only elements that are strongly correlated to the Brand in both cases are “urban environment” and “Barcelona attractions”. These two elements are very characteristic of the city of Barcelona, and eminently urban space. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, two subcategories within “urban environment” are also mentioned: “urban tourism/general sites” and “shopping”.

The strongest correlation of Barcelona within official tourism websites is with an adjective/attribute: “new/fashionable”. It seems that official sites promote the fashionability of Barcelona, its modernity and its image of being a new and vibrant city.

Travel blogs and reviews, however, relate it more strongly to probably the major attraction factor of Barcelona, its “tangible heritage”. Among the twelve most correlated elements, apart from tangible heritage itself, another 3 subcategories appear within tangible heritage (“Gaudi”, in third place, “Buildings and architecture”, in fifth place, and “art, design and art styles” in twelfth place). This means that for bloggers and reviewers, the image of Barcelona is intimately related to tangible heritage and especially to Gaudí and his buildings and architectural masterpieces. Other attraction factors strongly correlated to Barcelona by bloggers are “food and drinks” and “food and wine”, for which food is especially remarkable.

However, official tourism websites relate Barcelona to other attraction factors. Culture and tangible heritage attraction factors are related to Barcelona in a vague way (not to specific elements). In this sense, Barcelona is strongly correlated to “culture remaining words” (words related to culture in general) and to “history/industrial” (in which general words related to the history of the city appear). Other attraction factors correlated to Barcelona by official tourism websites are “leisure and recreation” activities and “leisure remaining words” and “shopping”.

Moreover, and remarkably, in third place, official tourism websites relate Barcelona to being “cheap”. This is surprising as in spite of all the propaganda to promote Barcelona as a quality tourism destination, a modern, cosmopolitan and cultural city, price seems to be one of the most strongly promoted elements in any case. Official tourism websites relate Barcelona to two more attributes: “authentic” and “orderly”. These elements might be expected as official sites stress the authenticity of the brand and its heritage and at the same time stress that it is an orderly city (probably trying to counteract the image of a chaotic place big cities usually have).

However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, the only attributes that are among the most strongly correlated elements are, in sixth position, “good feelings” but also “bad feelings” in ninth position. This is remarkable as it shows that although bloggers and reviewers relate Barcelona more strongly to good feelings, they also relate it, in good measure, to bad feelings. Therefore, both good and bad experiences occurring in Barcelona are explained.

Concerning identity references, official tourism websites stress the “Catalan” identity of Barcelona in fourth place, while travel blogs and reviews emphasize it as being “Spanish”, also in fourth place. In this respect we observe a clear dissonance in the identity correlated to Barcelona. In spite of the official propaganda relating Barcelona to being Catalan, bloggers and reviewers perceive it mainly as related to being Spanish.

In summary, for official tourism websites Barcelona is a Catalan new/fashionable, cheap authentic and orderly brand-city, an urban space with a culture and history, with many attractions where shopping and leisure and recreation activities can be conducted. For travel blogs and reviews Barcelona is a Spanish brand-city, an eminently urban space with plenty of tangible heritage and art, especially related to Gaudí and his buildings and architecture. Barcelona evokes mainly good feelings but also bad feelings.

- Catalunya Central (CatCe)

Official tourism websites relate Catalunya Central most strongly to attributes such as “old/old-fashioned” (the strongest correlation), in the sense of being a traditional region with an old history; to “authentic” (heritage and sites), to “good feelings” in general and to “luxurious/wealthy” elements. Remarkably, in the case of travel blogs and reviews this brand is also related to being “old/old-fashioned” (with history and old heritage) and also “quiet”, probably related to the natural and religious spaces found there, characterized by quietness.

Regarding attraction factors, on official tourism websites Catalunya Central is most strongly correlated to its “tangible heritage”, and within it, the “history/industrial” aspect (related also to the fact of being described as old), the “religious heritage” attraction factor, probably related to Montserrat, “art, design and art styles”, “buildings and architecture” and “monuments/sculptures” (also probably related to the statue of the Madonna of Montserrat). Official sites also relate it to the “urban environment” and “urban tourism/general sites”, probably because of the proximity to Barcelona.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, some of the attraction factors are common. These are related to “history/industrial” and to “religious heritage”, both probably related to the presence in the area of Montserrat abbey. In spite of that, the most strongly correlated elements to Catalunya Central are “nature and active tourism” and two of its subcategories “nature elements and places” and “nature sports and active tourism”. This is remarkable as we observe an image dissonance in this point because nature-related attraction factors are not among the most strongly correlated to Catalunya Central in the case of official tourism websites, while in the case of bloggers and reviewers this element seems to be extraordinarily important. Bloggers probably mention the nature element so often because of the singular natural landscape and activities found in the sierra of Montserrat. Apart from these elements, this brand is also related to “shopping” and to “food and wine” by bloggers and reviewers.

Concerning identity references or elements, no strong correlations are found on official tourism websites. However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews Catalunya Central is related to “Catalan” identity and to the Catalan festivity of “Sant Jordi”. Unlike Barcelona brand, Catalunya Central is seen as eminently Catalan by bloggers.

In summary, official tourism websites relate Catalunya Central to good feelings in general to it being old, authentic and luxurious/wealthy. Catalunya Central is a brand with prominent tangible, especially religious heritage, art, history, monuments and sculptures and also an urban aspect for being situated near Barcelona. Travel blogs and reviews see Catalunya Central as a quiet, old, Catalan place, with history, with nature-related attraction factors, prominent religious heritage, where Catalan celebrations such as Sant Jordi are held and where food and drinks are appreciated.

- Costa Barcelona (cBarc)

Official tourism websites relate Costa Barcelona more with the attribute “old/old-fashioned” (with history), which is also strongly related to the attraction factor “history/industrial”. Other attributes used by these websites are “good feelings” in general and, remarkably, they relate the brand to being “new/fashionable”, which is the opposite of the first attribute. This means that official tourism websites consider it old with history and new and modern at the same time. Besides, travel blogs and reviews only strongly relate one attribute to the brand, that is “old/old-fashioned”, coinciding with official tourism websites. This means that both bloggers and official sites describe the territory and its sites as old with history. Regarding attraction factors, official tourism websites relate CBarc with leisure in general, culture in general, and “tangible heritage”, the urban environment, and sites (due to the proximity to Barcelona Metropolitan area) and to the sun the sea and the sand.

Travel blogs and reviews relate CBarc most strongly to three subjects: First, “Sun, Sea and Sand”, which is strongly correlated to the brand and is also among the more strongly correlated attraction factors on official tourism websites. Second, bloggers also correlate the brand to “intangible heritage”, being two elements of intangible heritage in the second and third stronger correlation places: “festa major” and “carnival”; carnival is especially famous in the town of Sitges, this is very different from official tourism websites which give more emphasis to the tangible heritage of the region. Third, it is very strongly correlated to the specific element of “wine”, to its stem category “food and wine”, and also to “food and drinks”. This means that bloggers relate this brand especially with wine and to food, these elements being fundamental for the transmitted-perceived image. Finally, it is also related to leisure and recreational activities and to cultural leisure (theatres/spectacles/cinemas/music).

Concerning identity references, official tourism websites relate the brand to being eminently “Catalan”, and also relate it to the “Barna” Barcelona brand, because of its proximity. The official promotion always ties Costa Barcelona to a visit to and the proximity of Barcelona itself. However, bloggers and reviewers relate Costa Barcelona with broader geographical and cultural identities: the “Global” and the “Mediterranean”. This is a remarkable difference between both types of texts, as despite the strong relation with Catalan identity in official propaganda, bloggers and reviewers relate it to vague general identities such as the Global and the Mediterranean, probably indicating the touristy nature of the brand.

In summary, official tourism websites see Costa Barcelona as an old, Catalan place with history but also new and fashionable. It is seen as a place of leisure, of sun, sea and sand,

with urban tourism and tangible heritage. Travel blogs and reviews see this brand as a global, Mediterranean place, but also an old place, where you can enjoy the sun, sea and sand, the wine and the food, and its intangible heritage (especially the festa major and carnival). It is also seen as a place of culture, leisure and cultural leisure.

- Costa Brava (cBrav)

Costa Brava is one of the brands for which the attraction factors on official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews are most coincident. In both cases, among the attraction factors most strongly correlated to Costa Brava are “sun, sea and sand”, the “history/industrial” aspect of the area, attraction factors related to “nature and active tourism”, “other city attractions”, which include attractions located in cities other than Barcelona such as Girona, and “military/castles” structures, which are in both cases strongly correlated to Costa Brava. Apart from these common factors in both images, official tourism websites relate the brand territory to leisure in general. On the other hand, travel blogs and reviews relate the brand very strongly to “artists” and “museums”, a relationship that is closely linked to the Dalí museum in Figueres, one of the most visited sites of the brand. It is also related to archaeological sites, probably mainly referring to the ruins of Empúries.

Regarding feelings and attributes, both types of websites present different images: official tourism websites relate it very strongly to “good feelings” in general, to it being a “quiet”, peaceful and an “authentic” place. On the other hand, travel blogs and reviews relate it both to “unpleasant” and “love” feelings and experiences. This is remarkable as the brand is strongly correlated to a negative feeling, meaning that for some of the bloggers some of the sites or experiences may have been unpleasant, while the image of official sites is predominantly positive.

Regarding identity and geographical references, it is remarkable that official tourism websites relate Costa Brava to the brand of Pyrenees, probably meaning that much of the promotion of these brands is carried out jointly, or that the products and attraction factors presented in both brands are imaged as complementary. No identity reference is among the concepts most correlated to the brand. Instead, in the case of official tourism websites, the Costa Brava is strongly correlated to Spanish identity, meaning that bloggers and reviewers ascribe a Spanish identity to it.

In summary, Costa Brava is seen by official tourism websites as a quiet, old, authentic place which evokes good feelings and has a rich history, whose attraction factors are the sun, the sea and the sand, leisure activities and nature and active tourism as well as fortresses and castles and attractions specific to cities such as Girona. It is related to another brand: Pyrenees. For travel blogs and reviews, it is Spanish place both related to love and to unpleasant experiences, with many city attractions (such as in Girona), and an old place where you can visit archaeological sites, fortresses and castles, with a strong relationship with artists and museums (Dalí museum), where you can enjoy both the sun the sea and the sand and nature and active tourism activities.

- Costa Daurada (cDaur)

At first sight Costa Daurada stands out from the rest of the brands because almost all of the most strongly correlated elements in travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites coincide. In this sense it has the most consonant image between projected and perceived images of all brands.

Both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews, Costa Daurada is related to “other city attractions” (located in its area, especially in Tarragona), to “sun, sea and sand”, as it is a coastal territory, to “theme parks”, as one of the major theme parks in Europe, PortAventura, is located there, to “archaeological sites”, as the capital of the region, Tarragona, has been declared a world heritage site because of its Roman ruins, and also to being “old/old-fashioned”, with history. It is also related to “leisure and recreation” activities and leisure in general as the area offers plenty of leisure activities and has a bustling nightlife, and finally it is also related to its “intangible heritage” and traditions. Regarding intangible heritage, it is remarkable that travel blogs and reviews relate the brand with the Roman festival “Tarraco viva” which is held annually in Tarragona. Apart from that, official tourism websites emphasize the tangible heritage of the area in general, while travel blogs and reviews emphasize another specific aspect: “art, design and art styles”. Moreover, official tourism websites relate it with good feelings in general.

Concerning identity references, official tourism websites emphasize the Catalanity of the area, and relate it strongly to being “Catalan”, while travel blogs and reviews relate it more to being “Mediterranean” and to being related to another geographically adjacent brand: Terres de Lleida. Possibly, these two brands are visited jointly by bloggers and reviewers.

In summary, Costa Daurada is for both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews an old place with history and many city attractions, where you can enjoy the sun, sea and sand, where you can visit tangible heritage such as the old archaeological sites and enjoy many leisure activities, including a visit to the theme park, PortAventura. It is also a place related to its intangible heritage, especially to the Tarraco Viva festival in the case of bloggers. Travel blogs and reviews identify it as a Mediterranean place while official tourism websites as a Catalan one.

- Pyrenees (Pyren)

This brand can be distinguished from the rest because it is highly correlated to a single attraction factor category both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. This singular attraction factor that distinguishes Pyrenees is “nature and active tourism” and within it several “nature elements and places”, “nature-related words” in general and the “rural landscape” characteristic of this mountainous brand. Moreover, unlike official tourism websites, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, the sports aspect, so related to nature, is emphasized because among the twelve most correlated elements we can find “nature sports and active tourism” (which includes hiking and adventure sports) and “other sports” (which include skiing, among others).

Other important attraction factors mentioned in both types of files are the “history/industrial” aspect of the brand and the “religious heritage”. The latter is remarkable as the brand includes a series of Romanesque churches also considered World Heritage Sites. This point is emphasized by official tourism websites which also relate it to being old.

In both cases, positive attributes are used to describe this brand. Official tourism websites relate it with “good feelings” and to “love” and say it is authentic. Travel blogs and reviews relate it with its beauty and mainly say it is “beautiful”.

Concerning identity references, remarkably in the case of Pyrenees it is the bloggers and reviewers who relate it to Catalan identity. It must also be noted that while Pyrenees are strongly correlated to the Costa Brava brand on official tourism websites, they are correlated more to the Terres de Lleida brand in the case of travel blogs and reviews. This last relationship is explainable as these two brands were previously united.

- Terres de l’Ebre (tEbre)

It should be noted that in the case of travel blogs and reviews, results for this brand may not be accurate as very few entries mention it.

It is remarkable that, similarly to Pyrenees, Terres de l’Ebre is very strongly related to “nature and active tourism” both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. Different “nature elements and places” and words related to nature in general are mentioned. This strong relationship with nature is mainly due to the Delta de l’Ebre natural park, the presence of the river Ebre, and the unspoilt hinterland. The “history/industrial” aspect of the area is also mentioned in both cases.

Regarding other differential attraction factors, official tourism websites relate the area with “sun, sea and sand”, as it is a coastal area, to “archaeological sites”, and “intangible heritage”, especially to the Catalan celebration of Sant Jordi. In the case of bloggers and reviewers, this brand is related to military buildings and castles. This area is a densely populated one with castles dating back to the Arab conquest. Bloggers also related it to the “rural landscape”. Indeed, Terres de l’Ebre is an eminently rural region, with plenty of vine and olive tree agriculture.

Remarkably with regard to identity references, in this case official tourism websites ascribe to it a stronger “Mediterranean” identity while it is bloggers relate it to “Catalan” identity. It is also remarkable that in both cases this brand is related to Costa Daurada, which is its neighbouring brand. Previously, Terres de l’Ebre and Costa Daurada formed a single brand and belong to the same administrative region, and this image still seems to prevail. Surprisingly, Terres de l’Ebre is related by bloggers to the Costa Brava brand.

Regarding feelings and attributes, official tourism websites describe it with “good feelings” in general and as “old/old-fashioned” with history. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, bloggers relate the brand both to “unpleasant” experiences and to “love”, seemingly contradictory attributes.

In summary, Terres de l'Ebre are seen by both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews as an area with history, full of nature and suitable for active tourism, closely related to the Costa Daurada brand. Official sites, consider it a Mediterranean territory, where sun, sea and sand tourism and intangible heritage can be enjoyed, as well as an area to visit archaeological sites. They relate it to good feelings. Travel blogs and reviews also relate it to military structures and castles, to its rural landscape, to its Catalan identity and to leisure in general. They see it as unpleasant and lovely at the same time.

- Terres de Lleida (tLlei)

Terres de Lleida stands out from the rest of the brands because it is the one which has the most dissonant projected and perceived-transmitted images.

Only the "Rural landscape" attraction factor is common on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. This brand region has a rich rural landscape and is famous for its fruit products and olive oil. Regarding attraction factors, official tourism websites relate it to the sun, the sea and the sand. This is strange as the brand does not have a coastal area. This means that probably this brand is mentioned along with other nearby coastal brands in a joint promotion. Official sites also mention its "art, design and art styles" and culture in general. On the other hand, travel blogs and reviews, stress its "religious heritage" sites (its capital, Lleida, for instance, has a famous cathedral called la Seu Vella), its "history/industrial" past, its "nature and active tourism" aspects, especially emphasizing the nature elements and spots of the area and the sports that can be done there, such as cycling and skiing. In this respect, travel blogs and reviews give a more diverse view of the area.

Regarding identity references, unexpectedly, official tourism websites relate it more to "European" identity and travel blogs and reviews both to "Catalan" and "Spanish" identity at the same time. Hence, this brand seems to have unclear identity rapports. However, official tourism websites relate it to a traditional Catalan celebration specific of the area: the "*Aplec del cargol*". Moreover, official tourism websites mention Terres de Lleida along with the Barcelona brand and bloggers do so along with Pyrenees and Costa Daurada brands, both adjacent brands with strong historic and geographical relationships.

Attributes more related to describing the area are quite unexpected. According to data, the strongest correlation made by official tourism websites is with "bad feelings" in general, with it being "expensive", "empty", "noisy" and "distressful", all very negative adjectives. This could be interpreted in an opposite way: as this brand is not one of the most well-known official sites probably present it as a place to counteract bad feelings, noisiness and stress, an empty place to relax, not very expensive. In the case of travel blogs and reviews the only attributes used are "quiet" and "new/fashionable", relating the brand to a modern innovative image.

In summary, Terres de Lleida is related to its rural landscape. Official sites see it as a European area related to the sun, sea and sand, to art, design and art styles and to culture in general. They see it as a place to counteract bad feelings, noisiness and stress. Besides, travel blogs and reviews see it as a Catalan and a Spanish place, they relate it to nature,

active tourism and sports, to its religious heritage and history. They see it as a quiet, fashionable place strongly related to the Pyrenees and Costa Daurada brands.

- Significant Negative correlations

It is remarkable that in the case of official tourism websites no significant negative correlations exist, probably indicating that all destinations within Catalonia are promoted jointly and are not imaged as being exclusive to one another.

However, some significant negative correlations can be found in the case of travel blog and review entries. The major negative correlations, significant (2-tailed) at the 0.01 level, appear among some brands that were previously described as being relatively exclusive from one another (if one is mentioned the other is not): Barcelona, Costa Brava and Costa Daurada. All three brands are notable tourist destinations in themselves. Barcelona and Costa Daurada have the strongest negative correlation of all, -0.062, and Barcelona and Costa Brava have a negative correlation of -0.47.

It seems that some of the attraction factors that are exclusive of one of these brands become exclusive too from the other two brands and have significant negative correlations. The clearest cases may be the negative correlations between Barcelona attractions (only present in Barcelona) and the mention of Costa Brava and Costa Daurada (-0.049) and also the negative correlations of Gaudí and Costa Brava (-0.042) and Costa Daurada (-0.039), as the element of Gaudí seems to be correlated exclusively to Barcelona. Similarly, Barcelona and “Other city attractions” (-0.021) have a negative correlation, which is explained because the category “other city attractions” contains only specific attractions and sights in cities of Catalonia other than Barcelona.

Costa Daurada is also negatively correlated to “artists” (-0.029), this brand does not seem to be known for its artists or to be associated with them by tourists. Instead, both Barcelona and Costa Brava have strong correlations with artists, Barcelona being strongly related to Gaudí, and Costa Brava to Dalí.

The Costa Brava brand is negatively correlated to: “theme parks” (-0.027) as the Costa Brava does not have any major theme park, while Barcelona (with the Tibidabo) and especially Costa Daurada (with PortAventura) are strongly correlated to this element. It is also negatively related to “sporting events/watching” (-0.019), which seems to be a category quite exclusive to Barcelona. In this sense we observe certain specializations of the brands.

As we have seen, the strongest negative correlations emphasize the exclusivity of the Barcelona brand, containing the city of Barcelona, and the two most touristy coastal brands and the attraction factors related to these brands.

3.2.1.5.2. Cluster analysis of brands

Results of the cluster analysis of brands as dependent variables in relation to the other categories (predictors) are shown in table 3.44. As can be observed, at first sight the decision trees containing the independent variables which predict the brands (targets) have

similarities and also differences among the ones generated from official tourism websites and from travel blogs and reviews.

Table 3.44
Cluster analysis of brands

	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES 5-level tree depth	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS 5-level tree depth
Barna	Barcelona attractions, Museums, Monuments/sculptures, Urban Environment, Catalan, Spanish, Buildings and architecture, Nature and active tourism, Leisure and recreational activities	Tangible Heritage, Urban Environment, Leisure and recreational activities, Nature and active tourism, Beautiful, Sports, Food and Drinks, Urban tourism/general sites, Barcelona attractions, Spanish, Good feelings, Gaudí, Food and Wine, Sporting events/watching, Catalan, Sun, Sea, Sand, Nightlife and partying, Religious heritage, History/industrial
CatCe	Noisy, Luxurious/wealthy, Rural landscape, Barcelona attractions, Religious heritage, Nature and active tourism	Old/old-fashioned, Nature and active tourism, New/Fashionable, Archaeological sites, Carnival, History/industrial, Food and Wine, Religious heritage, Good feelings, Winery, Quiet
cBarc	Cava, Mediterranean, Sun, Sea, Sand, Catalan, Spanish, Buildings and architecture, Food and Wine, Museums, Urban tourism/general sites	Sun, Sea, Sand, Cava, Carnival, Gaudí, Buildings and architecture, Theatres/spectacles/cinemas/music, Urban tourism/general sites, Barcelona attractions, Nightlife and partying, Tangible Heritage, Wine, Relax, Spanish, Intangible Heritage, Winery, Catalan, Mediterranean

cBrav	<p>Other city attractions, Sun, Sea, Sand, Military/castles, Tangible Heritage, Theatres/spectacles/cinemas/music, Barcelona attractions, Good feelings, Archaeological sites, Religious heritage</p>	<p>Other city attractions, Archaeological sites, Artists, Sun, Sea, Sand, Gaudí, Barcelona attractions, Good feelings, Food and Drinks, History/industrial</p>
cDaur	<p>Cava, Wine, Sun, Sea, Sand, Catalan, Buildings and architecture, Urban Environment, Art, design, art styles</p>	<p>Archaeological sites, Barcelona attractions, Theme Parks, Gaudí, Nightlife and partying, Catalan, Urban tourism/general sites, Good feelings, Nature and active tourism, Food and Wine, Nature elements and places, Tangible Heritage, Intangible Heritage, Art, design, art styles, Friendly, Modest/poor, Urban Environment, Sun, Sea, Sand</p>
Pyren	<p>Mediterranean, Nature sports and active tourism, Religious heritage, Nature and active tourism, Culture remaining words, Nature elements and places, Military/castles, Buildings and architecture, Tangible Heritage, Lively</p>	<p>Barcelona attractions, Rural landscape, Nature and active tourism, Urban Environment, Catalan, History/industrial, Gaudí, Nature elements and places Sun, Sea, Sand Bad feelings Urban tourism/general sites Religious heritage Food and Wine Beautiful Military/castles Nightlife and partying</p>
tEbre	<p>Nature remaining words, Nature elements and places, Military/castles, Intangible Heritage, Buildings and architecture, Museums, Sun, Sea, Sand, Culture remaining words, Tangible Heritage, Urban tourism/general sites, Food and Wine</p>	<p>Nature and active tourism, Urban Environment, Old/old-fashioned, History/industrial, Art, design, art styles, Nature elements and places, Buildings and architecture, Urban tourism/general sites, Tangible Heritage, Leisure and recreational activities, Nightlife and partying, Fun/interesting</p>

tllei	Nature and active tourism, Rural landscape, Religious heritage, Sun, Sea, Sand, Leisure and recreational activities, Fun/interesting, Urban tourism/general sites	Quiet, Rural landscape, Nature sports and active tourism, Olive oil, Catalan, Beer, Bad feelings, Nature and active tourism
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Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) and 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

- Barcelona (Barna)

Regarding Barcelona, important similarities can be found among its predictor independent variables in both types of files, as seen in Table 3.44. In the case of official tourism websites the variable predicting most cases of Barcelona is “Barcelona attractions”, which includes several urban spaces and sites of the city and lies within the category of urban tourism. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, the major predicting variable is that of “tangible heritage” (which includes all the subcategories within tangible heritage), which shows that the presence of tangible heritage elements of all types predicts the presence or mention of Barcelona. The combination of urban tourism variables and tangible heritage-related variables seems to be present both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews.

Regarding **official tourism websites**, the best predictor variable, “Barcelona attractions”, predicts the presence of the brand in combination with other independent variables:

1. if “Barcelona attractions” are not present in the file, this predicts 81.2% of cases. Of these, the presence of “museum” predicts them. If “museums” are not present, this predicts 51.9% of cases, and it is then “monuments and sculptures” which predict the cases. If museums are present once (14.1%), it is “buildings and architecture” which predict the cases. Finally if museums are present from 1 to 4 times (10.2%), it is “Spanish” which predicts them. It is remarkable that on official tourism websites it is Spanish and not Catalan identity which predicts the appearance of Barcelona.
2. If “Barcelona attractions” are present once (8.9% of cases), it is the presence of “nature and active tourism” which predicts it.
3. If “Barcelona attractions” are present more than once in the file (9.8%), it is the presence of “leisure and recreational activities” which predicts the case.

In the case of official tourism websites, we can see that the combination of variables that best predicts the presence of Barcelona at the third level level is the combination of Barcelona attractions + museums + monuments and sculptures. However, their combination for the largest number of cases (51.9) is a combination of their absence (where all three are 0). Hence the next variable in that branch is the urban environment (46.6%), which in reality means that only the presence of urban environment and the absence of the other three variables (which for this case are not present) explains 46.6% of the cases where Barcelona appears.

Concerning **travel blogs and reviews**, the best predictor, “tangible heritage”, predicts the presence of Barcelona in combination with other independent variables (which in turn predict it):

1. If “tangible heritage” is not present in the files (≤ 0), it is “urban environment” which predicts Barcelona (36.5% of cases). The other categories predicting Barcelona within this branch, on the third level, are: “Leisure and recreational activities” (20%) if urban environment is not present, “urban tourism and general sites” (8.1%) if urban tourism is present between 1 and 2 times, “Spanish” (3.8%) if it is mentioned from 2 to 4 times, and “good feelings” (3.2) if it is mentioned from 4 to 8 times.
2. If “tangible heritage” is present between 0 and 10 times, “good feelings” predict 43.9% of cases. If “good feelings” are not present or are present more than 9 times, it is “urban environment” which predicts 19.3% of cases. If “good feelings” are present between 1 and 6 times, it is the “Gaudí” variable which predicts 20.9% of cases. If good feelings are present between 6 and 9 times, it is “sun, sea and sand” which predicts 3.6% of cases.
3. If “tangible heritage” is present between 10 and 17 times, the variable “Spanish” predicts 9.5% of cases. If the variable “Spanish” is not present, “nightlife and partying” predict the brand. If “Spanish” is present one or more times it is predicted by “Gaudí”.
4. If tangible heritage is present more than 17 times, it is again the “urban environment” which predicts 10.1% of cases. In turn, if it is present from 0 to 4 times or more than 8 times it is predicted by “Gaudí”, if it is present from 4 to 8 times it is predicted by “sporting events/watching”.

We observe that in the case of travel blogs and reviews, the two clusters of independent variables at three levels that predict most the presence of the dependent variable Barcelona are: Tangible heritage + Urban environment + Leisure and recreational activities (20%) or Tangible heritage + Good feelings + Gaudí (15.9%).

Comparing both trees we see that urban environment is the strongest predicting variable for Barcelona that both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews have in common.

- Catalunya Central (CatCe)

At first sight we observe that no common independent variable is found at the third level, between the tree generated from official tourism websites and the one generated from travel blogs and reviews. In spite of that, two common explanatory variables are found at the 4th and 5th levels (“religious heritage” and “nature and active tourism”).

On **official tourism websites** we see that the variable which best predicts Catalunya Central is “noisy”. In fact, the absence of this variable predicts Catalunya Central (meaning that indeed the brand is presented as especially not noisy or quiet).

1. If the variable “noisy” is absent from the files, this explains 95.8% of cases while if “noisy” is present, the next category to define the brand is “luxurious/wealthy”. Again, this category defines Catalunya Central for its absence. If luxurious/wealthy is not present, this explains 91.4% of all cases while the ones where it is present are only 4.4%. In the cases where “luxurious/wealthy” is absent, it is “rural landscape” that defines the brand. If “rural landscape” is present more than once, this explains 5.2% of all cases, if it is present once or never, it is “Barcelona attractions” that defines the brand, although they are at a fourth level they explain 86.2% of all cases, showing the clear association of the brand to Barcelona and the probable joint promotion by official sites of the two brands.
2. If “noisy” is present, it predicts only 4.2% of cases.

In **travel blogs and reviews**, the variable which predicts the largest number of cases is the attribute “old/old-fashioned” (related to old heritage and historic sites).

1. If “Old/old-fashioned” is present 0, 8-10, 13-15, 18 or more times, it predicts 83.5% of cases and then it is “nature and active tourism” which best predicts the presence of Catalunya Central. If “Nature and active tourism” is present once or not at all, it is the variable “new fashionable” which accounts for 75.9% of cases, and if it is present more than once it is the “history/industrial” variable which accounts for 7.6% of the cases.

2. If “old/old-fashioned” is mentioned 2, 3 or 5 times, it predicts 5.2% of cases. In turn if “old/old-fashioned” is not present, it is “history/industrial” which defines cases and if that is not present, it is “good feelings” which accounts for 3.5% of cases.

3. If “old/old-fashioned” is present 1 or 6 times, it predicts 10.3% of cases. If the category “winery” is not present related to “old/old-fashioned”, it is the variable “quiet” which defines 9.1% of cases.

4. If “old/old-fashioned” is present 4, 7, 11 or 12 times, this category itself is a final node and predicts the presence of Catalunya Central brand.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews we observe that the combination of some variables predicts a good number of cases. These would be: old/old-fashioned + nature and active tourism or old/old-fashioned, the absence of winery + quiet.

- Costa Barcelona (cBarc)

At first sight we see that for both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews two categories coincide to define and explain brand presence: “Cava” and “sun, sea and sand”.

In the case of **official tourism websites**, the major predictor variable for the dependent variable of Costa Barcelona is “cava”.

1. If “Cava” is present, on its own it predicts 4.4% of the targeted brand cases.

2. If “cava” is absent (95.6% of cases), it is the “Mediterranean” variable which predicts the cases in combination with other sub-variables. If the variable “Mediterranean” is absent, it is the “sun, sea and sand” variable which defines 82.2% of cases. If “Mediterranean” is present once, the presence or not of “food and wine” predicts the variable. On the other hand, if “Mediterranean” is present more than once, the “Mediterranean” variable on its own predicts 3.8% of cases.

In this case the combination of “cava” + “food and wine” and the absence of “Mediterranean” accounts for almost 10% of cases and is remarkable. This means that in these 10% of cases the presence of CBarc brand is related to oenotourism and gastronomic tourism.

In the case of **travel blogs and reviews**, the decision tree of Costa Barcelona shows that the strongest explanatory independent variable for the brand is “sun, sea and sand”. This area has some important sun and sea enclaves such as Sitges and Calella. Many tourists visit the brand because of the sun and the sea but the brand also has other important attraction factors such as wine and Sitges carnival. It is also a destination visited along with Barcelona because of the proximity of the two.

1. If “sun, sea and sand” is present less than once, it is then “cava” which explains the dependent variable in 64% of cases. If “cava” is not present either, it is “Carnival” which explains most of the cases (66.7%). This indicates that “carnival” on its own (without mentioning either “cava” or “sun, sea and sand”) can explain 66.7% of cases and is therefore an element with a very strong entity and relationship with the brand.
2. If the “sun, sea sand” variable is present once, this predicts 12.6% of cases. In those cases, it is the presence or not of “Barcelona attractions” which explains the cases. If “Barcelona attractions” is not present (7.3% of cases) it is “nightlife and partying” which explains the cases. If “nightlife and partying” is not present either, this represents 5.5% of cases, and if it is present more than once this represents 1.8% of cases. In the case in which Barcelona attractions is present more than once, this explains 5.3% of the total cases of CatCe; in this case it is “wine” which defines the dependent variable, or in its absence “relax”.
3. If “sun, sea and sand” is present from one to three times (9.1%) it is the “Gaudí” variable which defines the brand, in turn, if “Gaudí” is not present “intangible heritage” defines the brand (5.3% of cases), which is significant as in this case 5% of tourists appreciate both “sun, sea and sand” and the “intangible heritage” (this latter variable is not strongly present). If “Gaudí” is present, it is “wine” that defines 3.2% of cases.
4. Finally, if “sun, sea and sand” is present more than three times (10.9%), it is the presence of “Carnival” which defines the brand. If “Carnival” is not present or is present three times, this accounts for 10.2% of cases, in which case, again, the presence or absence of “Gaudí” explains the dependent variable.

In the case of bloggers and reviewers some combinations are interesting. For example that of “sun, sea and sand” + “nightlife and partying” and the absence of “Barcelona attractions” accounts for 7.3% of cases, meaning that in this proportion, tourists are not interested in visiting cultural or urban sites in Barcelona but are interested in the sea and the sun and in nightlife and partying. However, the combination of “sun, sea, sand” + “Barcelona attractions” + “wine” (5.3%) indicates the type of tourism performed related to the coast, to the proximity of Barcelona and to wine and oenotourism in the Penedès region. This combination shows a shared interest in coastal, urban and oenological tourism. Similarly, the combination of “sun, sea, sand” + “carnival” + “Gaudí” explains 4% of the cases, and “sun, sea, sand”, + Carnival + Barcelona attractions and the absence of the “Catalan” variable explains 5.1% of cases. In general we see multiple combinations of this brand, showing a diverse but well defined tourist offer and the performance of activities related to the proximity to Barcelona and Gaudí, to the sea and the sun, to wine and Carnival.

- Costa Brava (cBrav)

In general terms, we observe that in the case of the Costa Brava brand, only the strongest predicting variable “other city attractions” coincides at a three-depth level among official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. This variable is very prominent for this brand as it contains many urban sites present in the brand region, especially in Girona.

In the case of **official tourism websites**, 1. the presence of “other city attractions” on its own defines 5% of cases of the dependent variable.

2. However, if “other city attractions” are absent, the variable “sun, sea and sand” predicts the dependent variable in 95% of cases. If “sun, sea, sand” is not present at all, it is the

variable “military/castles” that predicts the brand. If “sun, sea and sand” is present from 1 to 8 times, it is “Barcelona attractions” that explain 31.8% of cases. If “sun, sea and sand” is present from 8 to 13 or more than 13 times, the variable “religious heritage” accounts for 17.4% of case prediction.

Regarding this brand, the combination of “other city attractions”, “sun, sea and sand” and “Barcelona attractions” is interesting, indicating that official tourism websites promote visits to cultural sites and beaches in the Costa Brava and visits to nearby Barcelona.

In the case of **travel blogs and reviews**, as already mentioned, 1. “other city attractions” is the major discriminant variable. 2. In the cases where “other city attractions” is not present at all or is present more than 16 times (99% of cases), it is “archaeological sites” which next defines the brand. In turn, if “archaeological sites” is absent, it is the category “artists” which predicts the majority of cases (93.7%). These categories are capable of predicting CBrav as, for example, this territory contains the archaeological site of Empúries, the heritage city of Girona, and is home to the museum of famous artist Dalí in Figueres. If, on the contrary, “archaeological sites” is present more than once (5.3%) it is the category “food and drinks” which explains the presence of the brand variable.

Surprisingly, “sun, sea sand”, for which this brand is famous, is not one of the better predictors of the brand. Instead, interesting combinations are those of “other city attractions” + “archaeological sites” + “food and wine” and that of “other city attractions” + “artists”, which indicates eminently urban and cultural tourism in the first case, probably related to the visit to Girona and Empúries, and in the second case to the visit to Girona and probably the Dalí museum.

- Costa Daurada (cDaur)

In the case of Costa Daurada brand as a dependent variable, we observe that no coincidences in predictor independent variables are found among official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. This shows, therefore, very different images for these two brands. In spite of that, some coincidences are found on a 5-depth level.

In the case of **official tourism websites**, the variable which best predicts Costa Daurada is “cava”. This could seem surprising as this brand is not a great producer of cava. However, it is the absence of this element which predicts 95.6% of cases of the brand. Hence, the absence of “cava” may predict Costa Daurada.

1. If “cava” is not present, it is the “wine” variable which defines it best. On its own, “wine” accounts for 6.6% of the cases of the brand, meaning that it is for these cases its main defining element. 2. Finally, if neither “wine” nor “cava” are present. it is “sun, sea and sand” which defines 89% of cases, meaning that this element is one of the strongest predictors of the brand on official tourism websites.

Regarding **travel blogs and reviews**, the variable whose presence most predicts the presence of Costa Daurada is “archaeological sites”. This can be explained as Costa Daurada contains the world heritage Roman archaeological site of Tarragona. However, not all tourists are interested in this heritage.

1. If “archaeological sites” are absent from the files (94.4% of cases), it is “Barcelona attractions” which predicts the brand. If, again, “Barcelona attractions” is absent, “theme parks” on its own predicts 61.9% of cases. If “Barcelona attractions” is present more than once, it is “nature elements and places” which predicts the brand (32.5%).
2. If “archaeological sites” is present once or more times, “Gaudí” is the next variable to predict the brand in 5.6% of cases. If “Gaudí” is not present either, it is “art, design and art styles” that explains the brand. If “Gaudí” is present it is “intangible heritage” which defines the brand and explains only 2.2% of cases.

Remarkably, a majority of cases for Costa Daurada in travel blogs and reviews is explained by the presence or absence of the variable “theme parks”, which refers to the major theme park Port Aventura. Especially in the entries where no reference to cultural heritage visits such as “archaeological sites” and “Barcelona attractions” is made, it is “theme parks” that defines it. This means that many tourists who do not carry out cultural or urban activities, do spend time in a theme park. Then, other positive relationships are those of “archaeological sites” + “Gaudí” or + “art, design and art styles”, showing a more cultural tourist profile.

If we compare the trees for official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews we observe a very strong dissonance between both types of file clusters of predicting variables. In general, in both types of files Costa Daurada is one of the brands that is most predicted by specific variables at the third level.

- Pyrenees (Pyren)

At first sight we observe that the variables most strongly predicting Pyrenees brand do not coincide between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. The only coincident explicative variable at the third level is “religious heritage”. Then, two closely related variables “nature sports and active tourism” (OTWs) and “nature and active tourism” (T-Blogs and Reviews) appear in both types of files.

Concerning **official tourism websites**, we see that the variable “Mediterranean” is the one which best predicts the presence of Pyrenees in the sense of it being opposite to this concept.

1. If “Mediterranean” is not present (83.5% of cases), it is “nature sports and active tourism” which defines the dependent variable. If “nature sports and active tourism” is not present either, it is “religious heritage” which predicts the brand in most cases (in 72.8%). If “nature sports and active tourism” is present, it is the presence of “buildings and architecture” which next predicts Pyrenees’ presence (in 10.7% of cases).

If “Mediterranean” is present once, again it is “religious heritage” which predicts the presence of Pyrenees in 10.1% of cases. If “Mediterranean” is present more than once, the attribute “lively” predicts the brand.

In the case of **travel blogs and reviews**, the variable whose presence best predicts Pyrenees is “Barcelona attractions”.

1. If “Barcelona attractions” is absent from the file (61.2% of files), it is “urban environment” which predicts the brand’s presence. If “urban environment” is not present either, it is “nature and active tourism” which accounts for 7.5% of prediction of cases.

2. If “Barcelona attractions” is present from 1 to 3 times, 12.7% of cases, it is next “Gaudí” which predicts the brand.
3. If “Barcelona attractions” is present more than 3 times (11.2%), it is the attribute “beautiful” which explains the brand.

In this sense, we observe that for travel blogs and reviews, Pyrenees might be a brand which is visited along with “Barcelona attractions” and “Gaudí”, or a brand attracting flows of tourism on its own with the urban environment of its villages (such as Besalú, with its famous bridge and Jewish heritage) and their nature and active tourism possibilities. It should be remembered that many natural areas of great interest are found in the Pyrenees region.

- Terres de l’Ebre (tEbre)

In the case of Terres de l’Ebre brand, we observe that none of the explanatory variables coincide at the third level. However, the strongest predictor variable for official tourism websites (“nature remaining words”) and for travel blogs and reviews (“nature and active tourism”) are very similar, indicating that the variable which explains the presence of the brand is its nature elements. This can be explained because, probably, the most important attraction factor of the brand is the Delta de l’Ebre natural park.

In the case of **official tourism websites**, the main predicting variable is that of “nature remaining words” (or nature words in general).

1. If “nature remaining words” is present more than 3 times (9.1%), it is then “food and wine” which best predicts the presence of the brand and explains all cases.
2. If “nature remaining words” is present 3 times or less, another related variable is the one which best explains the brand, “nature elements and places”. If this, in turn is not present, it is the “military/castles” of the brand which explain 41% of cases. If “nature elements and places” is present from 0 to 8 times, it is “sun, sea and sand” which predicts the presence of the brand. If it is present more than eight times on its own, it predicts 4% of cases.

Hence, we observe that official sites relate the brand eminently with nature and make some interesting combinations: nature + food and wine or nature + sun, sea and sand. If nature is not present, it is the tangible heritage “military/castles” which stands out (this brand has a series of castles and fortresses related to the Arab conquest).

In the case of **travel blogs and reviews**, the first predictor variable is that of “nature and active tourism”.

1. If “nature and active tourism” is present only once or is absent, it is the “urban environment” variable which predicts 87.8% of cases. If “urban environment” is present 4 or less times it is the attribute “old/old-fashioned” which predicts the brand’s presence. If “urban environment” is present more than 4 times, it is the combination with the variable “buildings and architecture” which becomes the best predictor.
2. If “nature and active tourism” is present more than once (12.2% of cases), it is again the “urban environment” variable which is the best predictor. On its own, “urban environment” predicts the cases where it is not present at all (2.6%) and the cases where it is present more

than once (8.2%). If it is present once it is the attribute “fun/interesting” which best explains the presence of the brand.

Hence we observe that the bloggers who are not so interested in nature go to Terres de l'Ebre because of its urban environment, old/old-fashioned heritage with history and buildings and architecture. Besides, those who are more interested in nature also combine it very often with visits to the urban environment and find all these activities fun/interesting.

- Terres de Lleida (tLlei)

At first sight we observe that one variable coincides in both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews at the third level: “rural landscape”. “Rural landscape” seems to be a defining variable for this brand. Besides, some other variables are similar in both cases “nature and active tourism” and “nature sports and active tourism”.

In the case of **official tourism websites**, the first vertebrating and predicting variable for the presence of the brand is “nature and active tourism”.

1. If “nature and active tourism” is present 14 times or less (90.1% of cases), “rural landscape” is next to predict the brand. “Rural landscape” (in combination with nature and active tourism) predicts 4% of cases. If “rural landscape” is present once or is not present (86.1% of cases), it is “religious heritage” which best predicts it.
2. If “nature and active tourism” is present more than 14 times (9.9% of cases) it is “urban tourism/general sites” which predicts the presence of the brand.

Therefore we observe interesting combinations such as “nature and active tourism” + “rural landscape” + “religious heritage” or “nature and active tourism” + “urban environment”.

In the case of **travel blogs and reviews**, the best predicting variable is the attribute “quiet”.

1. In this case if the attribute “quiet” is not present or is present 5, 15, 11 or 7 times (94.6% of cases), it is “rural landscape” which next predicts the presence of the brand. If “rural landscape” is present 0, 3, 4, 5 or 7 times, it is “nature sports and active tourism” which define the brand's presence (93.4). For the rest of cases, it is “rural landscape” on its own which predicts them.
2. If the “quiet” variable is present once or three times (4.5%), it is the “nature and active tourism” variable which defines the brand. For the rest of cases, it is “quiet” on its own which predicts the presence of the brand.

Again, some interesting combinations arise: “quiet” + “rural landscape” + “nature, sports and active tourism” or “quiet” + “nature and active tourism”.

3.2.2. Results per brands through geographically classified travel blogs and reviews

From now on, only data from travel blogs and reviews will be analysed. A comparative analysis with information from official tourism websites is not feasible at sub-regional brand detail level as many official tourism website files cannot be classified by brands as they contain information of multiple brands or of the whole of Catalonia. In this analysis of categories by brands, the site-wide density measure has been chosen as the best comparative and the most significant measure.

The following sections intend to analyse travel blogs and reviews' perceived-transmitted image with a geographical regional perspective, by deepening into the analysis of the data by established tourist brands. This stage of the research intends to study in depth image as expressed by tourists. The database used to calculate the data by brands is smaller than the previous one and has a total of **23,435 files** (travel blog and review entries). These files are purposefully geographically classified by tourists (by brand or town). Geographically unclassified files have been ruled out for this part of the analysis.

3.2.2.1. Distribution of attraction factors per brands

The calculation of the distribution of attraction factors per brands is only possible in the case of travel blogs and reviews because the information is classified geographically by the bloggers themselves.

Table 3.45 shows the presence or mention of the different tourist attraction factor categories per Catalan brands made in travel blogs and reviews. Such presence is given in percentages. The description and detailed explanation of the presence of the attraction factors per brands can be found in the different indexed cards of each brand.

In summary, the most remarkable aspects shown by the graphs in Figure 3.7, are that Catalonia in general is mostly associated with its "tangible heritage" and "urban environment".

Similarly the Barcelona brand is mostly associated to its "tangible heritage" and to an "urban environment" (it is the brand with a higher percentage of this attraction factor). It is also remarkable that it has the higher association with "sports" or all brands.

Catalunya Central, Pyrenees and Terres de l'Ebre are three brands associated both with their "tangible heritage" and with "nature and active tourism", slightly less strongly. Pyrenees is the one with a stronger association to "nature and active tourism".

Costa Barcelona is most strongly associated with "sun, sea and sand", and especially remarkable is its association with the "food and wine" attraction factor and the fact that it has the highest percentage of "intangible heritage" mentions.

Costa Brava is associated with "tangible heritage" and "sun, sea and sand".

Costa Daurada, despite being most strongly associated with its "tangible heritage" especially stands out for its extraordinarily strong association with "leisure and recreation". It is also associated with "sun, sea and sand".

Terres de Lleida is very strongly associated with its "tangible heritage". It is also strongly associated with the "food and wine" attraction factor and with that of "nature and active tourism".

Table 3.45

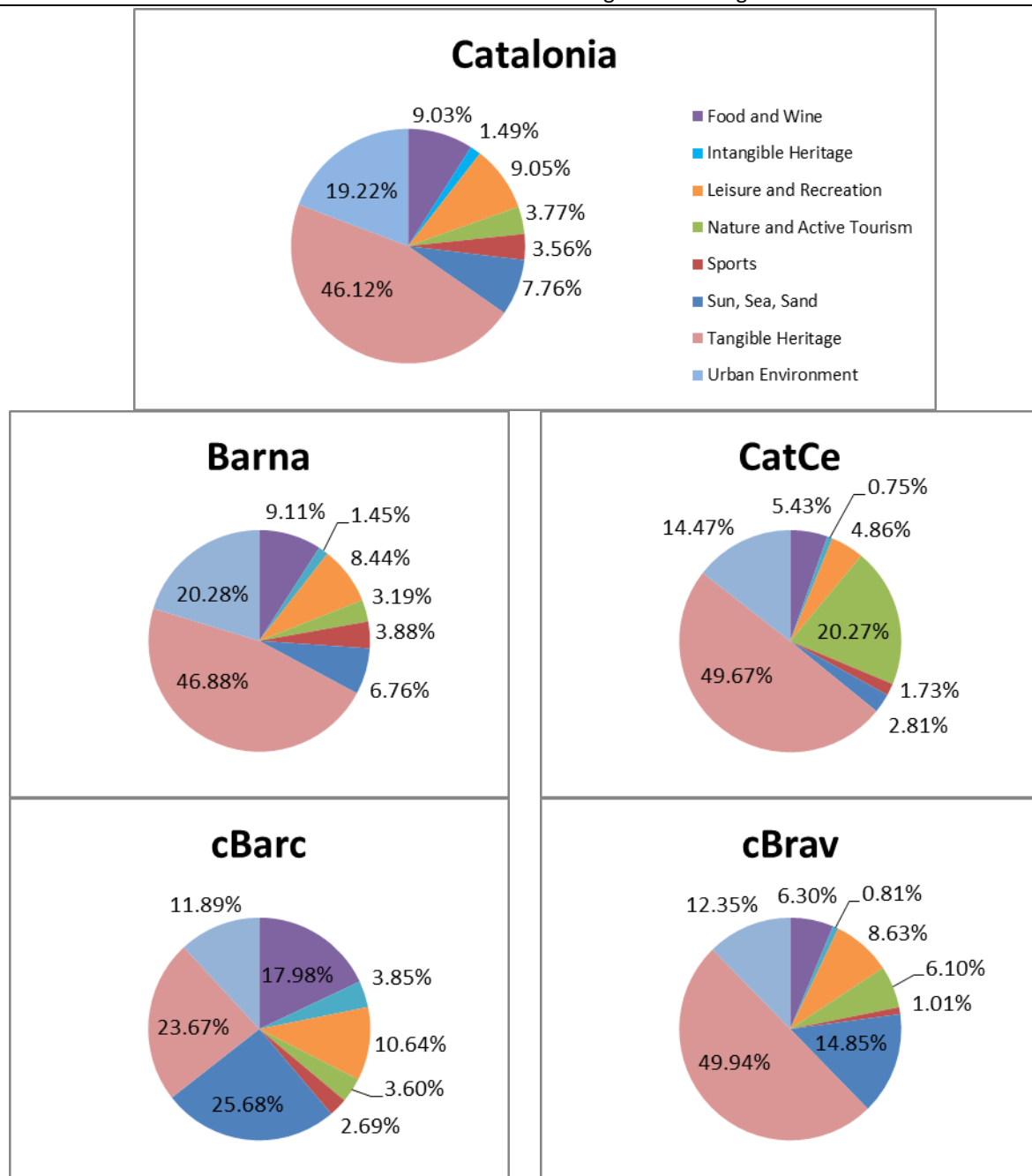
References to tourist attraction factors per Catalan brands (travel blogs and reviews) as a percentage

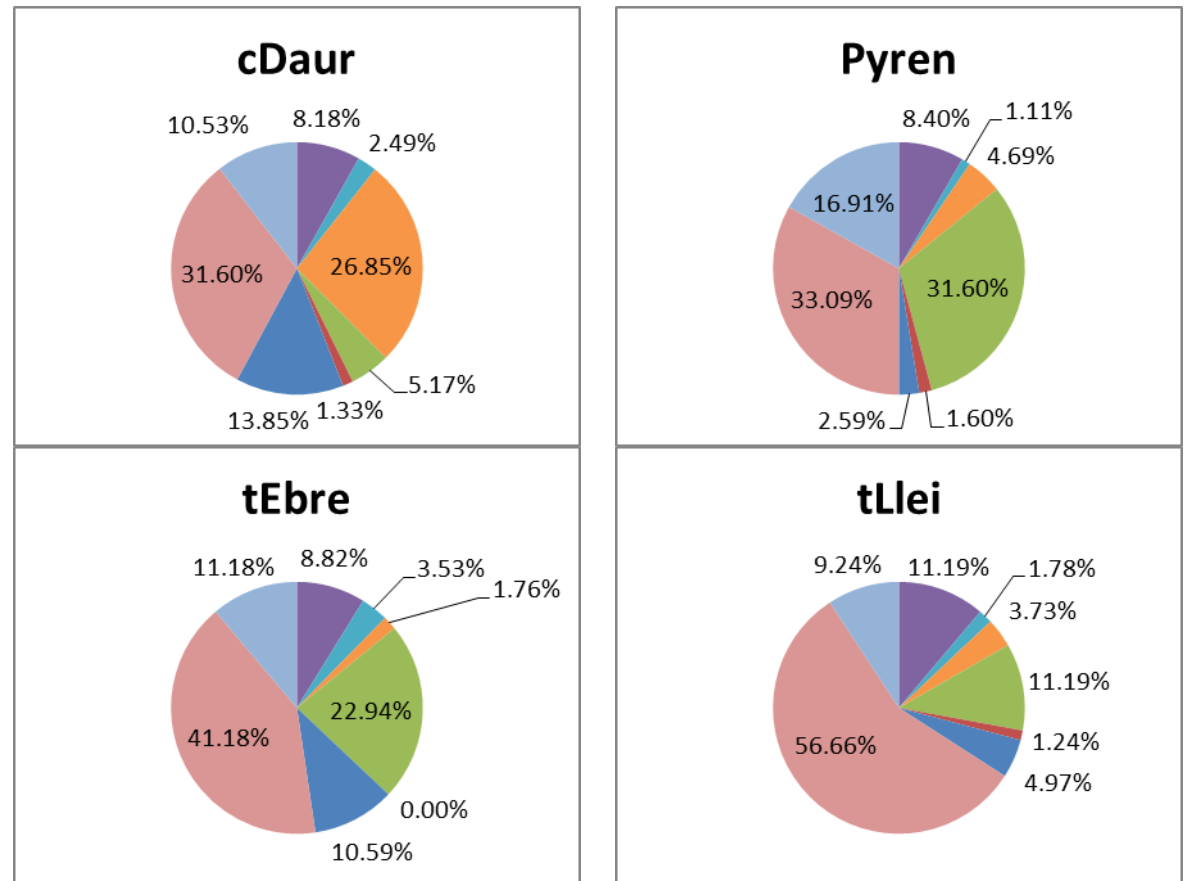
Attraction factor	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	CAT
1. Food and Wine	9.11	5.43	17.98	6.30	8.18	8.40	8.82	11.19	9.03
1.1 Food and Drinks	88.74	78.01	54.20	85.10	81.10	92.65	86.67	80.95	86.96
1.2 Wine	11.26	21.99	45.80	14.90	18.90	7.35	13.33	19.05	13.04
2. Intangible Heritage	1.45	0.75	3.85	0.81	2.49	1.11	3.53	1.78	1.49
3. Leisure and Recreation	8.44	4.86	10.64	8.63	26.85	4.69	1.76	3.73	9.05
3.1 Nightlife and partying	50.05	23.81	65.06	36.92	41.00	13.16	100.00	47.62	48.49
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/ cinema/music	24.84	66.67	20.31	47.57	10.70	13.16	0.00	14.29	24.86
3.3 Theme parks	10.48	2.78	0.57	0.92	44.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.11
3.4 Wellness	11.50	4.37	11.79	12.59	3.14	73.68	0.00	33.33	10.75
3.5 Leisure remaining words	3.14	2.38	2.27	2.00	0.53	0.00	0.00	4.76	2.78
4. Nature and active tourism	3.19	20.27	3.60	6.10	5.17	31.60	22.94	11.19	3.77
4.1 Nature elements and places	63.54	65.68	63.45	65.26	62.04	64.45	82.05	60.32	63.85
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	16.60	22.24	15.97	14.90	13.89	23.05	2.56	26.98	16.89
4.3 Rural landscape	3.00	0.86	5.88	5.99	6.14	1.95	0.00	7.94	3.30
4.4 Nature remaining words	16.86	11.22	14.71	13.85	17.93	10.55	15.38	4.76	15.96
5. Sports	3.88	1.73	2.69	1.01	1.33	1.60	0.00	1.24	3.56
5.1 FC Barcelona	29.87	15.56	56.74	8.33	5.03	0.00	-	14.29	29.44
5.2 Sporting events/watching	63.34	61.11	33.15	43.63	43.40	15.38	-	42.86	62.25
5.3 Other sports	6.79	23.33	10.11	48.04	51.57	84.62	-	42.86	8.30
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	6.76	2.81	25.68	14.85	13.85	2.59	10.59	4.97	7.76
7. Tangible Heritage	46.88	49.67	23.67	49.94	31.60	33.09	41.18	56.66	46.12
7.1 Buildings and architecture	16.88	10.74	21.78	10.59	13.85	22.39	17.14	16.30	16.38
7.2 Gaudí	35.98	3.06	11.43	0.75	2.83	0.00	0.00	0.63	32.10
7.3 Artists	4.34	1.55	3.90	20.71	0.58	0.75	0.00	0.00	5.21
7.4 Art, design, art styles	9.28	5.51	15.13	11.20	19.45	10.45	12.86	8.78	9.64
7.5 Museums	6.43	3.45	9.58	18.29	4.99	0.75	0.00	0.00	7.09
7.6 Archaeological sites	0.98	0.62	1.66	5.91	20.19	1.87	5.71	5.02	1.75
7.7 History/industrial	2.28	4.38	5.17	5.26	7.00	23.13	12.86	8.46	2.69
7.8 Military/castles	5.02	2.60	5.87	7.15	6.26	6.34	24.29	11.91	5.18
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	4.85	6.21	4.41	2.06	4.28	0.37	2.86	1.88	4.66
7.10 Religious heritage	12.49	61.21	18.84	17.34	18.31	31.72	24.29	45.77	13.87
7.11 Culture remaining words	1.48	0.66	2.23	0.74	2.25	2.24	0.00	1.25	1.45
8. Urban environment	20.28	14.47	11.89	12.35	10.53	16.91	11.18	9.24	19.22
8.1 Shopping	14.52	19.97	29.22	21.01	26.96	10.22	5.26	28.85	15.22
8.2 Barcelona attractions	46.00	17.31	14.36	4.76	4.68	0.73	0.00	9.62	42.88
8.3 Other city attractions	0.13	2.66	0.13	13.41	11.74	7.30	0.00	0.00	0.88
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	39.36	60.05	56.29	60.82	56.62	81.75	94.74	61.54	41.02

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

In the following graphics in Figure 3.7 we can see the different attraction factors of Catalonia and its tourist brands according to travel blogs and reviews. The graphs in this case only show the 8 major attraction factors and give a visual idea of their distribution per brands. The same colours used in these figures will be used to explain and to identify each attraction factor and its sub-attraction factors in the indexed cards of each brand.

Figure 3.7
Attraction factors of Catalonia and the Catalan brands according to travel blogs and reviews





Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

In this part, detailed **indexed cards** were constructed for each brand and its attraction factors or categories. These indexed cards contain the different attraction factors in order of density or presence (from the most to the least dense). The same decreasing order is followed by the subcategories within them (from denser to less dense). Each of the eight general categories is marked with its corresponding colour to distinguish and identify it.

It should be noted that the subcategories with less than 0.5% of presence with respect to their total categories were not included as their presence is very low and not significant.

- Barcelona (Barna) Indexed Card

Table 3.46
 Barcelona (Barna) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	46.88%	- Sagrada Família - Gaudí - Parc Güell - Church - museum	The main tourist attraction factor of the Barcelona brand is its tangible heritage. It can be observed that the Barcelona brand identity and image are mainly associated with Gaudí and architecture. Gaudí, his masterpieces and the related subject of architecture account for more than one half of the tangible heritage mentioned about Barcelona.

7.2 Gaudí	35.98%	- Sagrada Família - Gaudí - Parc Güell - Casa Batlló	It is very remarkable that Gaudí and his masterpieces represent by themselves more than one third of the total words mentioned about tangible heritage. The Barcelona brand is clearly identified with Gaudí.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	16.88%	- Building/s - architecture	The second most frequent category is closely related to the Gaudí theme, as his works of art are mainly architectural.
7.10 Religious heritage	12.49%	- church - cathedral - temple - monastery	This category and its most frequent words can be partly related to the Sagrada Família. The second most mentioned religious site is the Santa Maria del Mar temple.
7.4 Art, design, art styles	9.28%	- art/s - design/s/ed - gothic - roman	It is remarkable that the two most mentioned artstyles are the Gothic and the Roman.
7.5 Museums	6.43%	- museum/s - museu	Museums have a remarkable weight in Barcelona because Barcelona is an International cultural centre and has a wide offer of museums.
7.8 Military/castles	5.02%	- Montjuïc - tower/s - castle	The most mentioned element is Montjuïc.
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	4.85%	- statue - Columbus - Arc de Triomf - monument	It seems the two most imaged monuments in Barcelona are par excellence the Columbus monument and the Arc de Triomf.
7.3 Artists	4.34%	- Picasso - Miró - Dalí	Although only representing a small part of the tangible heritage, it is remarkable that the most mentioned words are 'Picasso', 'Miró' and then 'Dalí'.
7.7 History/industrial	2.28%	- history - medieval - civil war	It is interesting that the most mentioned historical period is the Medieval era and that after that, the Civil War is the historical event which identifies the brand the most.
7.11 Culture remaining words	1.48%	- culture/al - masterpiece	The last two categories are very little mentioned and the most mentioned words are quite imprecise.
8. Urban environment	20.28%	- ramblas - metro - rambla - market	Within the "urban environment" category the most common element mentioned, as could be expected, is 8.2 "Barcelona attractions".
8.2 Barcelona attractions	46.00%	- Ramblas - Metro - Gothic quarter - Boqueria Market	The three top urban sights of the Barcelona brand seem to be the Ramblas, the Gothic Quarter and the Boqueria Market.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	39.36%	- rambla - market - streets - plaza	These are the general sites that are mentioned about the urban environment of Barcelona. The most mentioned word 'rambla' probably refers to 'Ramblas'.
8.1 Shopping	14.52%	- shopping - shop/s - bought	Although Barcelona is a city with lots of shopping facilities, this factor only represents 14.52% of the urban attraction factor, probably meaning that shopping is not a fundamental attraction factor of Barcelona city. Probably the elements of the city itself are more identified with it than shopping, but we can see this element might be a notable complementary attraction factor to the whole urban environment.

1. Food and Wine	9.11%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tapas - wine - chocolate - beer - paella 	Barcelona has a good number of restaurants and places to drink. 1.2 "Wine" only represents 11.26% and the rest belongs to 1.1. "Food and drinks".
1.1 Food and Drinks	88.74%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tapas - paella - chocolate - beer 	It is remarkable that the most frequent foods and drinks are the typical "Spanish" stereotyped ones (Tapas and Paella) and that the other two are simply international food and drinks.
1.2 Wine	11.26%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wine - cava 	It is remarkable that "cava" (the Catalan version of champagne) is the second most mentioned word within the wine category
3. Leisure and Recreation	8.44%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bar/s - club - recovered - Tibidabo 	These two categories (1. "Food and wine" and 3. "Leisure and recreation") are considerably present because Barcelona, as a big city, has a great variety of restaurants and food offer and also a great leisure offer (concerts, theatre, nightlife, festivals, etc.).
3.1 Nightlife and partying	50.05%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bar/s - club - dancing - party 	Within the "Leisure and recreation" category, more than one half accounts for "nightlife and partying", meaning that Barcelona is identified to a great extent with the supply of nightlife and partying.
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	24.84%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - performers - dance/rs - festival - concert 	Then comes attraction factor 3.2 "Theatres/spectacles/cinema and music" with 24.84% due to the great offer of Barcelona as the cultural leisure capital it is.
3.4 Wellness	11.50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recovered - relaxing - relax/ed 	The Barcelona brand is loosely identified with recovery and relaxation.
3.3 Theme parks	10.48%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tibidabo - Aquarium - Zoo 	The top three theme parks in the area, as reported by bloggers, are the Tibidabo, the Aquarium and the Zoo.
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	6.76%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - beach - port - sea - sun 	After that comes the identification of Barcelona with attraction factor 6. "sun, sea and sand" (6,76%), which is comprehensible as Barcelona is a coastal Mediterranean port city.
5. Sports	3.88%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nou Camp - stadium - barca - Olympic - game 	Then we can see that the category of sports in Barcelona is the highest of all brands (3.88%)
5.1 FC Barcelona	29.87%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - barca/ça - Nou Camp - Camp Nou 	The world famous FC Barcelona accounts for almost 30% of the sports mentioned on its own.
5.2 Sporting events/watching	63.34%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stadium - olympic 	The most mentioned words seem to refer to the Olympic past of the city and its sports event infrastructure.
4. Nature and active tourism	3.19%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mountain/s - tree/s - nature 	This factor is low because of the eminently urban nature of the space of the brand.
4.1 Nature elements and places	63.54%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mountain/s - trees 	The most mentioned nature elements are the mountains, which can be found surrounding Barcelona, and the trees present in its multiple streets and parks.
4.4 Nature remaining words	16.86%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nature - natural 	

4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	16.60%	- climbing - hike	
2. Intangible Heritage	1.45%	- flamenco - parade - siesta - La Mercè/ Merce	This last category is surprisingly low as Barcelona holds multiple folkloric, traditional and popular mass celebrations (la Mercè, fireworks for Saint John, festes de Gràcia, religious celebrations, etc.). However, it seems bloggers do not identify the intangible heritage with the city and its surroundings very strongly, and the little they do, they associate it with flamenco, parades or siesta which are not traditions of Catalan origin. The only genuine celebration of Barcelona mentioned is La Mercè.

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

The two main categories can be easily understood if we consider that the Barcelona brand contains almost exclusively texts about Barcelona city: Barcelona is a city with plenty of tangible heritage and the Barcelona brand consists almost exclusively of a large urban space with the typical characteristics of a metropolis and the port of Barcelona receives hundreds of cruise ships every year.

- Catalunya Central (CatCe) Indexed Card

The tourist image identity expressed about Catalunya Central by bloggers seems to be mainly concentrated on Montserrat as a factor of attraction and tourist destination.

Table 3.47
 Catalunya Central (CatCe) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	49.67%	- monastery - basilica - church - black Madonna - statue	In the case of Catalunya Central the most mentioned category is also 7. "tangible heritage" (49.67%); in this case, this category is considerably high due to the presence of Montserrat, the top destination in this brand. CatCe is identified predominantly with religious tangible heritage.
7.10 Religious heritage	61.21%	- monastery - basilica - church - black Madonna	The predominant subcategory within this brand is by far 7.10 "Religious heritage" (61.21%). All the most frequent words seem to be related to the religious heritage of Montserrat, especially the 'black Madonna', which refers to the black Virgin of Montserrat.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	10.74%	- built - building - architecture	The most frequent words in this category are quite generic.
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	6.21%	- statue/s	The most mentioned word is by far 'statue', probably referring to the statue of the Virgin or Madonna of Montserrat.
7.4 Art, design, art styles	5.51%	- art - paintings - Romanesque	Paintings and Romanesque art seem to be the most cited art and design elements in this brand region.
7.7 History/industrial	4.38%	- history - factory	It is remarkable that the second most mentioned word within this subgroup is "factory" as the region has an important industrial past and notorious current industries.
7.5 Museums	3.45%	- museum	

7.2 Gaudí	3.06%	- Gaudí - Parc Güell	
7.8 Military/castles	2.60%	- castle - towers	
7.3 Artists	1.55%	- Picasso	
4. Nature and active tourism	20.27%	- mountain/s - hiking - hike - nature	This factor is also exceptionally high if compared to other brands, and can also be explained by the extraordinary nature and landscape component of the Montserrat sierra and because of the hiking and other nature activities that are held there.
4.1 Nature elements and places	63.54%	- mountain/s - rock formations - valley	The most common words most probably refer to the mountain of Montserrat and its unique rock formations.
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	22.24%	- hiking - hike - climbing - climbers	This subgroup is especially present in Catalunya Central if compared to other brands. It is remarkable that the most mentioned words refer to activities usually engaged in the Montserrat mountain range. Hiking and climbing the mountain, as well as rock climbing.
4.4 Nature remaining words	11.22%	- nature - landscape	
8. Urban environment	14.47%	- funicular/s - metro - plaza - bought	The major subcategory is 8.4 "Urban tourism and general sites". This category must be understood in the context of the great proximity to Barcelona of this brand area and the presence of medium-sized cities such as Terrassa and Manresa.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	60.05%	- funicular - plaza - funiculars	Of this subcategory the most mentioned word is 'funicular' also related to Montserrat. Indeed the word "funicular de Sant Joan" which is the transport taking passengers up to Montserrat abbey is mentioned several times.
8.1 Shopping	19.97%	- bought - shop	
8.2 Barcelona attractions	17.31%	- metro - tram	In this case the most mentioned words are related to transport in Barcelona. Barcelona is very close geographically to Catalunya Central.
1. Food and Wine	5.43%	- wine - paella - beer - tapas	CatCe has the lowest presence of this attraction factor among the brands. Despite its good gastronomical and wine-related offer, bloggers scarcely recognize this aspect of the brand territory identity.
1.1 Food and Drinks	78.01%	- paella - tapas - beer	The three most mentioned elements refer either to "stereotypical" Spanish foods (paella and tapas) and beer, which is an international drink.
1.2 Wine	21.99%	- wine - cava	This subcategory is quite importantly present if compared to other brands.
3. Leisure and Recreation	4.86%	- choir - drinking - performance - dancing	This category is in essence very different from the other brands. CatCe is the brand with the highest percentage of cultural leisure of all, and has very low percentages of more popular types of leisure (nightlife, partying, going to theme parks, etc.)
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	66.67%	- choir - performance	Cultural leisure is the most common type of leisure by far. Moreover, CatCe has the highest percentage of all brands of this element, contrasting with other brands such as Barcelona. The most mentioned word, 'choir', is related to the Escolania de Montserrat choir.

3.1 Nightlife and partying	23.81%	- drinking - dancing	This subcategory is very weak if compared to other brands, the second weakest after Pyrenees.
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	2.81%	- sun - beach - port - sea	This category is little mentioned as CatCe does not have a coastal area. The most mentioned word refers to the only element of this category not related with the sea, the sun.
5. Sports	1.73%	- stadium - sports - race	This category is little identified with the brand, probably because the most done sports in this brand are nature sports which have already been counted within "nature and active tourism".
5.2 Sporting events/watching	61.11%	- stadium - race	Most of the most common words are related to proximity to Barcelona.
5.3 Other sports	23.33%	- sports - bicycle	
2. Intangible Heritage	0.75%	- Sant Jordi - firecrackers - flamenco - revetlla de sant Joan	This brand territory is the least associated with the intangible heritage in relative terms. The traditional feasts and folklore of this brand are not seen as an important attraction factor. This can be surprising as, for instance, Montserrat conveys different religious celebrations.

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Costa Barcelona (cBarc) Indexed Card

In general it can be seen that for travel blogs and reviews the image of this brand is strongly related to the town of Sitges as a tourist destination.

Table 3.48
 Costa Barcelona (cBarc) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	25.68%	- beach - sea - beaches - sun	CBarc is the only brand where the sun, sea and sand attraction factor is the most prominent of all. Moreover, CBarc has the highest percentage of sun, sea and sand of all brands. This can be explained because it is an eminently coastal region stretching to both sides of the Barcelona brand and has internationally recognized coastal destinations such as Sitges. Accordingly, the most frequent words are 'beach', 'beaches', 'sea', 'sun'.
7. Tangible Heritage	23.67%	- church - museum - Gaudí - art	Despite the fact that it is the second most mentioned attraction factor for this brand, if compared to the other brands we see that it has the lowest percentage of tangible heritage presence. Therefore, although bloggers recognize this factor it is not as powerful as in other brand territories.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	21.78%	- building/s - architecture - Cau Ferrat - houses	Among tangible heritage the most mentioned elements are related to buildings and architecture. The words 'Cau Ferrat' refer to a famous house where modernist artists met, the word 'houses' probably refers to the same and to the numerous artistic houses in Sitges.
7.10 Religious heritage	18.84%	- church - cathedral	This brand, regarding religious heritage, is identified with churches and cathedrals.

7.4 Art, design, art styles	15.13%	- art - Roman - Art nouveau	This subcategory is the second highest if compared to other brands. Sitges is especially known for its art nouveau heritage and history. Roman heritage can be found near Sitges, in the Costa Daurada.
7.2 Gaudí	11.43%	- Gaudí - Sagrada Família	
7.5 Museums	9.58%	- museum	
7.8 Military/castles	5.87%	- castle - tower	
7.7 History/industrial	5.17%	- history - historic	
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	4.41%	- sculpture	
7.3 Artists	3.90%	- Picasso	
1. Food and Wine	17.98%	- wine - Codorniu - vineyard/s - tapas	CBarc has the highest “Food and Wine” presence of all brands, probably because the territory conveys the Penedès region, very famous for its cava and winery.
1.1 Food and Drinks	54.2%	- tapas - paella - delicious - fish	In relative terms it is the brand with the lowest percentage of food and drinks, probably eclipsed by the subject of wine. The most mentioned dishes are stereotypical Spanish ones, or fish platters.
1.2 Wine	45.8%	- wine - codorniu - vineyard/s - cava	This subcategory alone accounts for 45.80% of the food and wine category, being by far the highest presence of the wine attraction factor in a brand. The words most mentioned within this subcategory refer to the winery tradition and to famous cava businesses such as ‘Codorniu’.
8. Urban environment	11.89%	- streets - market - shops - shopping	The importance of this factor can be explained because the territory of the brand includes cities of the Barcelona metropolitan area. However, other brands have a greater urban component than CBarc.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	56.29%	- streets - market - passeig	The word ‘passeig’ probably refers to the coastal boardwalks present in most of the coastal destinations of the brand.
8.1 Shopping	29.22%	- shop/s - shopping	It is the brand with the highest concentration or identification with the shopping subgroup within urban tourism.
8.2 Barcelona attractions	14.36%	- metro - Barri Gòtic	It is geographically close to Barcelona.
3. Leisure and Recreation	10.64%	- bar/s - relaxing - festival - party	This brand has the second strongest identification with leisure and recreation of all brands. This leisure is mostly identified with nightlife and partying.
3.1 Nightlife and partying	65.06%	- bar/s - party - nightlife	This is the brand with the strongest significant percentage of “nightlife and partying” within the leisure category.
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	20.31%	- festival - film - dance	Although this brand does not have a very high percentage of this type of leisure, it is very illustrative that the most mentioned words refer to the International Film Festival of Sitges.
3.4 Wellness	11.79%	- relaxing	

2. Intangible Heritage	3.85%	- parade - carnaval - Fireworks - carnival	This brand is the most strongly associated with the intangible heritage of all brands. It seems the intangible heritage most mentioned is related to the internationally renowned Carnival of Sitges and to local festivities.
4. Nature and active tourism	3.60%	-mountain/s - flowers - strolling	Apart from Barcelona, this is the brand least identified with nature and active tourism.
4.1 Nature elements and places	63.45%	-mountain/s - flowers	
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	15.97%	- strolling	
4.4 Nature remaining words	14.71%	- nature - scenery	
5. Sports	2.69%	- Camp Nou - barca - game	The identification of this brand with sports is the second strongest after Barcelona. It is mostly identified with Barça because of the proximity to Barcelona.
5.1 FC Barcelona	56.74%	- Camp Nou - barca	
5.2 Sporting events/watching	33.15%	- game - Olympic stadium	

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Costa Brava (cBrav) Indexed Card

Table 3.49

Costa Brava (cBrav) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	49.94%	- Dali - Museum - Cathedral - church	Costa Brava is mostly identified with its “tangible heritage” (49.94%). This represents almost one half of its image identity. The Dalí museum in Figueres is one of the main attractions of the brand.
7.3 Artists	20.71%	- Dali - Dalí	The subcategory “Artists” is the most present within tangible heritage, with this percentage much higher than in any other brand. This subcategory is very strongly associated with Dalí.
7.5 Museums	18.29%	- museum - museu	The word museum is mentioned very often in this brand, and probably refers to the Dalí Museum on most occasions.
7.10 Religious heritage	17.34%	- cathedral - church - catedral - monastery	This category can be explained because of the heritage located in the city of Girona with its famous cathedral, among other religious heritage.
7.4 Art, design, art styles	11.20%	- art - painting - roman	Paintings are mentioned very often probably because of the Dalí paintings.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	10.59%	- houses - building/s	
7.8 Military/castles	7.15%	- castle - fortress	
7.6 Archaeological sites	5.91%	- walls - ruins	Although it is not specific, this words could refer to the Greek ruins of Empúries.

7.7 History/industrial	5.26%	- medieval - history	The historical period with which the brand is most identified is the Medieval.
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	2.06%	- statue - sculpture/s	
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	14.85%	- beach/es - sea - coast - mar - sun	The second most important factor is sun, sea and sand which is very popular in this coastal region. The Costa Brava is the oldest coastal tourism region of Catalonia, the most frequent words are related to this tourist specialization.
8. Urban environment	12.35%	- streets - Onyar - gardens - Jewish quarter	Identification with the urban environment of this brand may be due, in general, to elements of Girona, Figueres and some coastal resorts, such as Lloret de Mar.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	60.82%	- streets - gardens - bridge	The streets and bridge elements probably refer to the city of Girona with its famous narrow streets and the bridges over the Onyar river.
8.1 Shopping	21.01%	- shop/s - shopping	
8.3 Other city attractions	13.41%	- Onyar - Jewish quarter	"Other city attractions" (13.41%) is, in percentage, the most present among the brands. In this case the most common words are 'Jewish quarter' and 'Onyar', both urban elements of the city of Girona.
8.2 Barcelona attractions	4.76%	- ramblas	
3. Leisure and Recreation	8.63%	- theatre - teatre - bar - nightlife	The type of leisure most identified with the brand is cultural leisure followed by nightlife and partying. Costa Brava has a very significant offer of nightlife and entertainment, as well as all types of leisure (such as music festivals and theatre).
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	47.57%	- theatre - teatre - film - festival	The cultural leisure mentioned for Costa Brava probably refers to the multiple theatre spectacles offered in Girona and other towns of the brand and to the multiple festivals and film-related events organized within this territory.
3.1 Nightlife and partying	36.92%	- nightlife - bar - club	Costa Brava region also has some coastal resorts famous for its nightlife and partying such as Lloret de Mar.
3.4 Wellness	12.59%	- recovered - relaxing	
1. Food and Wine	6.30%	- wine - beer - coffee/café - tapas	Although the Costa Brava has some of the best restaurants in the world and a very good gastronomical offer, it seems that bloggers do not stress this aspect of the region very much.
1.1 Food and Drinks	85.10%	- beer - Coffee - tapas	The drinks mentioned are global drinks, and tapas are a stereotypical Spanish food.
1.2 Wine	14.90%	- wine - winery	It is remarkable that the word 'wine' is mentioned twice as much as the word 'beer'.
4. Nature and active tourism	6.10%	-mountain/s - flowers - trees - scenery - botanical	Although not very strong, this identification is higher than in other coastal brands (except for tEbre). Costa Brava means the "wild coast" and its natural wilderness was one of the main factors that made it become a major tourist region. Today, this identity diminished.

4.1 Nature elements and places	65.26%	- mountain/s - flowers - trees - Marimurtra	These elements are related to the natural relief of the brand which is already mountainous near the coast, and principally to the famous botanical gardens of Marimurtra.
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	14.90%	- hike - hiking	The most common nature activities seem to be related to hiking.
4.4 Nature remaining words	13.85%	- panorama - landscape - nature	The wildness of the brand territory landscapes and views is reflected in this subcategory.
5. Sports	1.01%	- game - golf - sports	This brand is very loosely identified with sports and sporting events in general.
5.3 Other sports	48.04%	- golf - sports	It seems that the brand has a specialization in golf.
2. Intangible Heritage	0.81%	- siesta - Fireworks - flamenco - parade	This brand seems to be very little identified with autochthonous Catalan intangible heritage. Despite the existing multiple local traditions and festivities it seems that bloggers do not identify this territory with them. Instead, the most common words are 'flamenco' or 'siesta', Spanish identity traditions.

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Costa Daurada (cDaur) Indexed Card

Table 3.50

Costa Daurada (cDaur) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	31.06%	- roman - cathedral - ruins - walls	Costa Daurada brand is most strongly identified with "tangible heritage" (31.60%), however if compared to the other brands this is a relatively low percentage, the second lowest of all brands.
7.6 Archaeological sites	20.19%	- ruins - walls - amphitheatre - Romans	It has the highest identification with archaeological heritage, which can be explained because Tarragona, the capital of this brand region, was declared a world heritage site for its ancient Roman ruins and Roman walls surrounding the old city.
7.4 Art, design, art styles	19.45%	- Roman - Gothic	The most recognized art style of this brand is by far the Roman style.
7.10 Religious heritage	18.31%	- cathedral - church - monastery	The word cathedral is by far the most mentioned. Tarragona has a renowned cathedral. In CDaur there exists a route of Cistercian monasteries.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	13.85%	- built - building/s	
7.7 History/industrial	7.00%	- history - tarraco	It is interesting that the second most mentioned word refers to the Roman denomination of Tarragona (Tarraco), referring to its Roman past.
7.8 Military/castles	6.26%	- tower - castle	There are many castles in the region.
7.5 Museums	4.99%	- museum	
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	4.28%	- statue - monument/s	
7.2 Gaudí	2.83%	- Gaudi	

7.11 Culture remaining words	2.25%	- culture - heritage - world heritage	These words may be related to the fact that the Roman heritage of Tarragona was considered a world heritage site.
3. Leisure and Recreation	26.85%	- PortAventura - bar - theme park - Port Aventura - water park	The most remarkable attraction factor of this region is “leisure and recreation” with (26.85%). It is by far the brand with the highest percentage of identification with this factor. This strong image identity is explained because PortAventura (one of the major theme parks in Europe) is located here, and the region also has water parks and nightlife and leisure offer.
3.3 Theme parks	44.63%	- PortAventura - Theme park - Port Aventura - water park	It is the category that has the highest percentage of theme park representation within leisure. The most frequent words make reference especially to PortAventura and to the other theme parks (water parks) in this area.
3.1 Nightlife and partying	41.00%	- bar/s - nightlife - pub	This brand is also identified very strongly with nightlife and partying. Indeed, the region has sites famous for this type of leisure such as Salou, La Pineda, etc.
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	10.70%	- circus - dance - festival	In this region a circus festival is held in Reus. However, this word may be related to the Roman heritage of Tarragona (Roman circus).
3.4 Wellness	3.14%	- relaxing - relax	
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	13.85%	- beach - sea - sun - beaches	CDaur is also strongly identified with “sun, sea and sand” (13.85%). The region is named after its golden beaches in coastal tourism and resorts, such as Salou, Cambrils and La Pineda.
8. Urban environment	10,53%	- placa - fountain - shops - rambla nova	In this case it is the second category less identified with this attraction factor. The percentage of identification can be explained by the presence of Reus and Tarragona and the shopping facilities of the area.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	56,62%	- placa - fountain/s	
8.1 Shopping	26,96%		The “shopping” subfactor is relatively high.
8.3 Other city attractions	11,74%	- rambla nova - passeig arqueològic	It is the second highest percentage of this subgroup if compared to other brands. The most common words within these attractions are: ‘rambla nova’ and ‘passeig arqueològic’ both located in Tarragona.
1. Food and Wine	8,18%	- wine - beer - chicken - fish	This percentage is relatively low if we acknowledge that the gastronomic offer of this region is very wide and that this brand conveys the Priorat wine region.
1.1 Food and Drinks	81.10%	- beer - fish - coffee - tapas	It is remarkable that one of the main foods mentioned is fish, as the area has an important offer of fish specialities and seafood cuisine, in towns such as Cambrils.
1.2 Wine	18.90%	- wine - champagne	The “Wine” subcategory only represents 18.90% of the total food and wine category. It is remarkable that for this brand ‘champagne’ is more mentioned than ‘cava’, a Catalan product.
4. Nature and active tourism	5.17%	- scenery - mountain/s - hiking - countryside	This region is not strongly identified with nature and the active tourism activities despite the richness of its mountains and hinterland.

4.1 Nature elements and places	62,04%	- mountain/s - delta	The word Delta is remarkable as the Ebre Delta is located in another brand (Terres de l'Ebre) but due to the geographical proximity of the brands it is possible that tourists who visit Costa Daurada also visit the delta natural park.
4.4 Nature remaining words	17,93%	- scenery - natural	
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	13,89%	- hiking - hike	
2. Intangible Heritage	2,49%	- human towers - castellers - Fireworks - parade - correfoc	Identification with intangible heritage is the second strongest of all brands. This can be explained because this region is the birthplace of the Catalan tradition of castells or human towers. The most mentioned words are 'human towers', 'casteller/s', 'fireworks', correfoc, all genuinely Catalan traditions. It is the only brand where Catalan traditions surpass more global or Spanish traditions, such as flamenco.
5. Sports	1,33%	- game - sports - golf - football	Finally, this region is very little identified with sports (1.33%) in spite of hosting some sporting events such as car rallies.
5.3 Other sports	51,57%	- sports - golf	This shows a possible specialization of the region with golf tourism.
5.2 Sporting events/watching	43,40%	- game - football	

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Pyrenees (Pyren) Indexed Card

In the case of Pyrenees, two attraction factors seem to dominate the bloggers' image. These are 7. "Tangible heritage" (33.09%) and 4. "Nature and active tourism" (31.60%).

Table 3.51
 Pyrenees (Pyren) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	33.09%	- medieval - church/es - architecture - buildings	Even though tangible heritage is the most prominent factor, its percentage is not one of the highest. Pyrenees brand territory is identified with its medieval and religious heritage.
7.10 Religious heritage	31.72%	- church/es - monastery	Pyrenees has an important religious tangible heritage consisting of Romanesque churches.
7.7 History/industrial	23.13%	- medieval - mediaeval	This subcategory is the highest in percentage of all brands. The most common word is 'medieval/mediaeval'. This means that probably Pyrenees is associated with its medieval villages, churches, castles, etc.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	22.39%	- architecture - buildings	
7.4 Art, design, art styles	10.45%	- Romanesque	Also related to the Romanesque heritage and Romanesque churches declared world heritage sites.
7.8 Military/castles	6.34%	- fortified - castle	

7.11 Culture remaining words	2.24%	- world heritage	The attribute 'world heritage' can be related to the Romanesque churches which have this distinctive label.
7.6 Archaeological sites	1.87%	---	
4. Nature and active tourism	31.60%	- national park - rafting - Aigüestortes - nature	This category is the largest of all if compared to other brands. No other brand is so identified with nature and active tourism by bloggers as Pyrenees. This is comprehensible because Pyrenees is a mountainous region, with numerous national parks, nature and diverse landscapes. It is also a region where the practice of nature sports and activities takes place.
4.1 Nature elements and places	64.45%	- national park - Aigüestortes	The most mentioned words are 'national park' and 'aigüestortes/aiguestortes'. This is very significant as it seems the nature of Pyrenees is associated with the specific Aigüestortes national park.
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	23.05%	- rafting	This brand has the second highest percentage of nature sports and active tourism of all brands. The most common words within this subcategory refer to 'rafting', showing a tie between this brand, mountain, nature and adventure sports.
4.4 Nature remaining words	10.55%	- nature	Nature and landscapes are importantly mentioned by bloggers.
4.3 Rural landscape	1.95%	---	
8. Urban environment	16.91%	- bridge - streets - Jewish quarter	Although this category may seem contradictory with the nature of the brand, it must be clarified that the urban environment category also comprises words related to small villages.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	81.75%	- bridge - streets	One of the most mentioned words in this category is 'bridge'. In Pyrenees, the village of Besalú has a well-known medieval bridge and narrow streets.
8.1 Shopping	10.22%	- shopping	Many traditional products can be bought in Pyrenees.
8.3 Other city attractions	7.30%	- jewish quarter	The village of Besalú has a renowned Jewish quarter.
1. Food and Wine	8.40%	- cheese	This identification with food and wine is not one of the strongest if compared to other brands in spite of the fabulous mountain cuisine of the region and its products such as cheese (which is a quite commonly mentioned word).
1.1 Food and Drinks	92.65%	- cheese	It has the highest relative percentage of association to "food and drinks" if we compare this subcategory to the other brands. The most common word within this sub group is 'cheese', a well-known product of Pyrenees.
1.2 Wine	7.35%	- wine	Pyrenees is very little identified with 1.2 "wine" (7.35%) as the region is not very well suited to cultivating vines.
3. Leisure and Recreation	4.69%	- recovered - fetival	This factor is low if compared to the other brands. However, there is a very remarkable fact as 73.68% of this category is composed of words related to "wellness".
3.4 Wellness	73.68%	- recovered	It is by far the brand with a highest percentage of "wellness" words. The most mentioned word is 'recovered'. Probably associated with relaxation or recovery after physical exercise or stress.

3.2 Theatre/spectacles/ cinema/music	13.16%	- festival	
3.1 Nightlife and partying	13.16%	- bar	
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	2.59%	- mar - sun	The sun, sea and sand factor (2.59%) is low, as expected, as Pyrenees does not have a coastal area. It has the lowest presence of this factor of all, probably meaning the image identity of the brand is quite opposed to the sun, sea and sand.
5. Sports	1.60%	- ski - skiing	This category is mainly related to skiing. However, it is surprisingly low given that Pyrenees has multiple ski resorts. Probably bloggers are not interested in skiing or do not come in the winter.
5.3 Other sports	84.62%	- ski - skiing	
2. Intangible Heritage	1.11%	- costume - carnival - fira	The low presence of this attraction factor indicates that the rich intangible heritage of this brand region is not mentioned very often by bloggers.

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Terres de l'Ebre (tEbre) Indexed Card

Before starting with this brand, we must say that because of the low total number of blogs classified as belonging to Terres de l'Ebre brand, the results might not be statistically significant.

Table 3.52
Terres de l'Ebre (tEbre) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	41.18%	- castle - church - building	This percentage, although high, is not one of the highest. This identification can be explained because of the multiple castles, churches and the historic relationship of this region with the civil war.
7.10 Religious heritage	24.29%	- church	
7.8 Military/castles	24.29%	- castle	
7.1 Buildings and architecture	17.14%	- building	
7.7 History/industrial	12.86%	- mediaeval - war	
7.4 Art, design, art styles	12.86%	-modernisme	
7.6 Archaeological sites	5.71%	- walls	
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	2.86%	----	
4. Nature and active tourism	22.94%	- Ebre - Delta	This category is so important for Terres de l'Ebre because the whole region is named to the river Ebre (Ebro) and this region hosts the river Ebre Delta and the Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park.

4.1 Nature elements and places	82.05%	- Ebre - delta	This percentage is, in relative terms, the highest of all brands. The most common words refer to the natural park of the Delta de l'Ebre. This region is especially well-known for birdwatching too, but no reference to this activity is found.
4.4 Nature remaining words	15.38%	- landscape	
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	2.56%	- hiking	
8. Urban environment	11.18%	- old quarter	This can be explained because despite not having big cities, this category also includes elements found in small vilages and towns.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	94.74%	- old quarter	
8.1 Shopping	5.26%	- sold	
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	10.59%	- coast - sunshine	Despite being one of the coastal brands it is the one where this element is least present, probably because Terres de l'Ebre is the only coastal region of Catalonia where mass coastal tourism and urban development have not taken place.
1. Food and Wine	8.82%	- cooking - fish - wine	
1.1 Food and Drinks	86.67%	- cooking - fish	Terres de l'Ebre is specialized in traditional seafood cuisine.
1.2 Wine	13.33%	- wine	
2. Intangible Heritage	3.53%	- bullring - bullfight	It is remakable that the intangible heritage mentioned is related to bullfighting. In Terres de l'Ebre, some traditions exist concerning bulls but none imply the killing of the animal.
3. Leisure and Recreation	1.76%	-----	This region does not have a big entertainment and leisure offer in the eyes of bloggers.
3.1 Nightlife and partying	100.00%	---	
5. Sports	0.00%	-----	It is not identified at all with sports

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

• Terres de Lleida (tLlei) Indexed Card

Before starting with this brand, we must say that because of the low total number of blogs classified as belonging to Terres de Lleida brand, the results might not be statistically significant.

Table 3.53
 Terres de l'Ebre (tEbre) Indexed Card

Attraction factor	%	Most Freq. Words	Comments
7. Tangible Heritage	56.66%	- church - Seu Vella - cathedral - cloisters	Terres de Lleida is the brand most identified with "Tangible heritage" (56.66%) in relative terms. The Terres de Lleida brand region is located in the hinterland and its attractions are in good measure its religious heritage and its castles.

7.10 Religious heritage	45.77%	- church - seu vella - cathedral - cloisters	The 'Seu Vella' and 'Cathedral' are words related to Lleida, the capital of the brand. The word cloisters could also refer to Lleida or to some monasteries of the area.
7.1 Buildings and architecture	16.30%	- building - houses	
7.8 Military/castles	11.91%	- tower - castle	Many villages in Terres de Lleida have castles and fortresses.
7.4 Art, design, art styles	8.78%	- Gothic	The art style with which Terres de Lleida is most identified is the Gothic.
7.7 History/industrial	8.46%	- historic - Medieval	The historic period most mentioned is the Medieval.
7.6 Archaeological sites	5.02%	- walls	
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	1.88%	- monument - statue	
7.11 Culture remaining words	1.25%	- cultural	
1. Food and Wine	11.19%	- cheese - fruit - wine	This category, along with "nature and active tourism", has the same percentage of presence.
1.1 Food and Drinks	80.95%	- fruit - cheese	This region has a considerable production of olives and olive oil and the words which appears the most within this category are 'fruit' and 'cheese'. Fruit is actually the most famous agricultural product of the region.
1.2 Wine	19.05%	- wine	
4. Nature and active tourism	11.19%	- mountains - rafting - trees -countryside	Although it is not one of the highest percentages of identification with nature and active tourism, we can say that for this brand it is quite important. This can be explained because the brand comprises part of Pyrenees and rural landscape where nature sports and activities are conducted.
4.1 Nature elements and places	60.32%	- mountains - trees	
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	26.98%	- rafting	
4.3 Rural landscape	7.94%	-countryside	
4.4 Nature remaining words	4.76%	- scenery	
8. Urban environment	9.24%	- market - plaza - shopping	This brand region is the least identified of all brands with an urban environment.
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	61.54%	- market - plaza	In this region, many small villages organize medieval markets, or traditional product markets.
8.1 Shopping	28.85%	- shopping	
8.2 Barcelona attractions	9.62%	- ramblas	
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	4.97%	- sea - sun	This factor is as expected to be low because Terres de Lleida does not have a coastal area.
3. Leisure and Recreation	3.73%	- bar - spa	This low percentage indicates that tourists do not identify this territory with leisure activities, probably due to their reduced offer.

3.1 Nightlife and partying	47.62%	- bar	Bars are common in all villages.
3.4 Wellness	33.33%	- spa	
3.2 Theatre/spectacles/cinema/music	14.29%	---	
2. Intangible Heritage	1.78%	- castellers	Within this brand, some intangible heritage traditions such as castellers, giants, parade and siesta are mentioned.
5. Sports	1.24%	- ski	This brand is very loosely identified with sports in general. It is most identified with nature sports.
5.2 Sporting events/watching	42.86%	---	
5.3 Other sports	42.86%	- ski	

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

3.2.2.2. Feelings and dichotomies by brands

- Barcelona (Barna)

In general, Barcelona is described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as beautiful, love, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting and lively), but also with adjectives which may have negative connotations (noisy, full, dirty and unsafe). Especially lack of safety is significantly present. The four concepts with highest densities are: good feelings, bad feelings, beautiful and fun/interesting.

Barcelona has about 5 times more “good feelings” (38.48‰) than “bad feelings” (7.71‰). Although the good feelings are much denser than the bad feelings, the density of bad feelings in Barcelona is considerably high if compared to other brands.

Apart from the good feelings in general, Barcelona is associated with another positive feeling: “love”, which is more than 12 times denser (2.50‰) than “hate” (0.19‰). Barcelona has the 3rd highest density of “love”-related words, just the same as average, however it also has the highest density of hate-related adjectives, above average which probably means that some specific bloggers explain their hateful experiences.

Barcelona attractions and experiences are described as being beautiful (6.12‰). Adjectives related to ugly are hardly present (0.11‰). However, in comparison to other brands Barcelona does not have one of the highest densities of “beautiful” words and instead has the third highest density of “ugly” words. Again, some specific bloggers seem to relate it with ugly things or experiences.

Barcelona is considered as especially “fun and interesting” (6.01‰) with a considerable density, higher than the average for Catalonia. However, “boring” adjectives are scarcely present (0.36‰) at all. Other positive concepts with which it is described are “pleasant” and “friendly”. Remarkably, Barcelona is considered by bloggers 48 times more friendly than unfriendly.

Barcelona stands out for being considered an especially “lively” brand (0.63‰) if compared to the others. This may be related to the fact that it is considered more “noisy” (0.87‰) than “quiet” (0.58‰) and more “full” than “empty” (0.21‰). In the same sense, although it is considered more “orderly” (0.46‰) than “chaotic” (0.30‰), the density of words related to

“chaotic” is high and, remarkably, it is considered more “dirty” (0.42‰) than “clean” (0.37‰) although both densities are similar. All this probably relates to the fact it comprises the big city of Barcelona. In contrast, despite comprising a big city, it is about 14 times more associated with “relax” (1.40‰) than with “distress” (0.11‰). Bloggers probably relate holidays and vacations with “relax”, even if they are spent in a big bustling city.

Barcelona is the brand with the most balanced densities of “new/fashionable” (2.12‰) and “old/old-fashioned” (2.47‰). Therefore the brand is described both for its old and new monuments, both for modernity and tradition. It is definitely considered to be “authentic” (2.08‰) as it is considered the second most authentic brand.

Negatively, it is said to be “cheap” and “modest/poor”. It is the second brand most identified with being cheap. This aspect may have some negative connotations. Finally, and probably most negatively and remarkably, Barcelona has the highest density of all of “unsafe” (0.84‰) which is higher than average, in contrast to adjectives related to “safe” (0.27‰) which are about four times less present.

- Catalunya Central (CatCe)

In general Catalunya central is described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as beautiful, love, pleasant, fun/interesting and quiet and orderly, and authentic), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (gloomy, full, dirty and unsafe). Especially dirtiness is importantly present.

Catalunya Central has about five times more good feelings (32.07‰) than bad feelings (6.67‰). Both the densities of good and bad feelings are below the average for Catalonia.

This brand stands out from the others because some of the positive adjectives used to describe it, despite being much more used than their negative counterparts, have some of the lowest densities. This is the case of “love” and “fun/interesting” (the second lowest), of “pleasant”, “friendly” and “relax” (the lowest). It should be emphasized that this brand has by far the lowest density of words related to “friendly” (0.08‰) but instead has the highest density of words related to “unfriendly” (0.03‰). The only explanation for this is that CatCe may be a brand for excursions and not of overnight stays where you are usually more in contact with people (so they can be friendly or unfriendly) and the activities performed there are mostly related with nature and religious heritage, hence these activities do not entail much contact with people. In contrast, Catalunya Central is described as being especially “beautiful” (8.49‰). This density is the second highest of all brands. Adjectives related to ugly are hardly present.

Unlike other brands, Catalunya Central is the only brand to have a higher density of adjectives related to “gloomy” (0.33‰) than to “lively” (0.23‰). Moreover, it is considered very “quiet” (1.06‰) and not “noisy” (0.38‰) and is considered more orderly (0.40‰) than chaotic (0.28‰). These, again, may be due to the type of tourism carried out in this territory, related to religious heritage and nature (which is not especially lively or noisy). In spite of this, it is considered to be much more “full” (1.90‰) than “empty” (0.23‰) probably due to the queues formed to go up to Montserrat. Also negatively, and surprisingly, it is the only brand considered much more “dirty” (0.91‰) than “clean” (0.35‰).

Catalunya Central attractions and experiences are described mainly as “authentic” despite having a density lower than the Catalan average. In this sense, Catalunya Central has a much higher density of adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (2.68‰) than to “new/fashionable” (1.16‰). Therefore, the brand is described more for its old monuments and history, probably referring to the religious sanctuaries.

In the case of Catalunya Central, adjectives related to “safe” have a density of 0.20‰ which is similar to the density of adjectives related to “unsafe” (0.25‰).

- Costa Barcelona (cBarc)

In general Costa Barcelona is described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, lively, orderly, authentic, clean and relax), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (noisy, full, modest/poor and unsafe). All in all, this brand seems to be described with just a few negative adjectives.

Costa Barcelona has about six times more “good feelings” (31.26‰) than “bad feelings” (5.12‰). Both the densities of good and bad feelings are below the average for Catalonia, and the density of bad feelings is the third lowest of all brands. Despite being also described as related to “love”, the density of this concept is lower than average, and instead words related to “hate” have the third highest density of all brands.

Adjectives related to “pleasant” (1.02‰) are about twelve times denser than the ones related to “unpleasant” (0.08‰). Remarkably in this case the words related to pleasant are higher than the average for Catalonia, indeed they have the second highest density in this brand. Hence, Costa Barcelona is associated with being especially pleasant.

It is also remarkable that this brand has a higher density of adjectives related to “friendly” (0.68‰) than average and an extremely low density of adjectives related to “unfriendly” (lower than 0.01‰). This means that Costa Barcelona is only associated with friendliness.

Costa Barcelona is much more related with liveliness (0.58‰) than gloominess (0.12‰), with being more “noisy” (0.99‰) than “quiet” (0.73‰) and with being much more “full” (1.70‰) than “empty” (0.31‰). These three adjectives relate to the touristy aspect of the region. In spite of this, it is strongly related to “relax” (2.11‰), with a density notably higher than the Catalan average. It has the highest density of adjectives related to relax of all. It is considered at the same time lively and relaxing.

It stands out for being described as the most “clean” brand (0.77‰) and one of the least “dirty” (0.12‰).

However, more negatively, it is the brand considered the least “authentic” or described as the least authentic of all. The density of authenticity is the lowest of all brands and the density of inauthenticity words is, in contrast, the highest. This could be due to the type of tourism performed here as tourists may not be so interested in seeing “authentic” things. Conversely, Costa Barcelona has a higher density of adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (4.52‰) than to “new/fashionable” (1.99‰) which indicates that this brand is described by its old sites and perhaps infrastructures too. In this sense, it is considered to be cheaper than

expensive and about two and-a-half times more “modest/poor” (0.31‰) than “luxurious/wealthy” (0.12‰). It is said to be more “unsafe” than “safe”.

- Costa Brava (cBrav)

In general Costa Brava is described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, lively, quiet, orderly, authentic, clean and relax), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (full, modest/poor and unsafe). All in all this brand seems to be described with just a few negative adjectives.

Regarding good feelings and bad feelings, Costa Brava has about five times more “good feelings” (34.23‰) than “bad feelings” (6.54‰). Both the densities of good and bad feelings are slightly below the average for Catalonia.

It is remarkable that Costa Brava has a lower density of adjectives related to “fun/interesting” (4.59‰) than average, the third lowest. In spite of that, however, the adjectives related to “boring” are more than ten times less frequent (0.43‰).

It is notably related to being “quiet” (1.13‰) and has a lower density of “noisy” (0.71‰) adjectives than average. In relation to that, it is the third brand most strongly related to “relax” (1.45‰), with a density notably higher than the Catalan average. Instead it is said to be much more “full” (1.30‰) than “empty” (0.25‰), and about equally “orderly” (0.40‰) and “chaotic” (0.32‰).

Costa Brava has the second highest density of adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (6.48‰). It is described much more for its old monuments and sites than for its modern elements. It is also considered to be more “cheap” and “modest/poor” (0.56‰) than luxurious/wealthy (0.14‰).

- Costa Daurada (cDaur)

In general Costa Daurada is especially described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, lively, orderly, authentic, clean and relax and authentic), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (noisy, full, expensive, modest/poor and unsafe).

Costa Daurada has more than six times more “good feelings” (51.67‰) than “bad feelings” (7.75‰). It is remarkable that in the case of this brand both the densities of good and bad feelings are the highest of all. Especially “good feelings” is very prominent for this brand and has a considerably higher density than average. However, in the case of “bad feelings”, these are just slightly above average. This means that bloggers especially use good feelings when describing experiences and sites in Costa Daurada.

Moreover, Costa Daurada has the highest density of words related to “love” (3.15‰). By contrast, it has a relatively low density of words related to “hate” (0.09‰). Another positive adjective used to describe it is “beautiful”. However, the adjectives related to “ugly” have the highest density in this brand (0.18‰), rather above the Catalan average. Therefore, it is the brand where both types of adjectives are closest (although still at a great distance).

This brand stands out for being especially “friendly” (1.59‰), three times more than average, and has the second highest density of all. “Unfriendly” adjectives are almost

inexistent. This means that Costa Daurada is strongly associated with friendliness if compared to other brands and with the Catalan average. Costa Daurada also stands out because it has the second highest density of adjectives related to “fun/interesting” (6.71‰) well above the average, but also the highest density of adjectives related to “boring” (0.53‰), also well above average. In spite of this, the adjectives related to “boring” are more than twelve times less frequent.

Costa Daurada is related with being “lively”, with being a “noisy” place (1.14‰) and with being “full”. In fact, it is the brand most strongly related to noisiness. It could be said that probably the Costa Daurada is the one considered the most touristy (for its noisiness, liveliness and for being full). In contrast, it is considered twice more “orderly” (0.25‰) than “disorderly” (0.13‰) and cleaner (0.66‰) than dirty (0.21‰) and especially related to “relax” (1.46‰). Indeed, it is the second brand most related to relax, with a density notably higher than the Catalan average.

Unlike the previous brands, Costa Daurada and its elements are considered to be more “expensive” (1.56‰) than “cheap” (1.09‰), but it is considered about 10 times more “modest/poor” (0.70‰) than “luxurious/wealthy” (0.07‰). This may be due to tourists’ sensitivity to prices in this brand.

In the case of Costa Daurada, adjectives related to “safe” have a density of 0.36‰, which is lower than the density of adjectives related to “unsafe” (0.46‰), meaning that tourists mention more its lack of safety than its safety. It is the brand with the second highest density of words related to “unsafe”.

- Pyrenees (Pyren)

In general Pyrenees are especially described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, quiet, orderly, authentic, clean and relax), and only with a few adjectives that may have negative connotations (full and modest/poor).

Pyrenees stands out for having more than thirteen times more “good feelings” (44.83‰) than “bad feelings” (3.63‰). It has the second highest density of “good feelings” and the lowest density of “bad feelings”. In fact, it is the brand with the highest proportional different between good and bad feelings, where good feelings are dominant. This means that bloggers especially use good feelings when describing experiences and sites in Pyrenees.

Pyrenees attractions and experiences are described as being the most “beautiful” (11.8‰) of all brands, with a density almost doubling the average for Catalonia. However, adjectives related to “ugly” are inexistent. Similarly, it is the brand which has the highest density of adjectives related to “pleasant” (1.27‰) (despite also having the highest density of adjectives related to “unpleasant”). Moreover, it is also considered the most “fun/interesting” brand with a density of 6.71‰, well above the average, although adjectives related to “boring” are inexistent. Therefore, this is the brand described as the most “beautiful”, “pleasant” and “fun/interesting” of all.

Remarkably, however, Pyrenees has the lowest density of words related to “Love” (1.45‰). Instead it has a relatively high density of words related to “hate” (0.18‰), the second highest. But, all in all, it continues to be described much more with “love”-related words.

Besides, Pyrenees equally relates to “lively” (0.18‰) and to “gloomy” (0.18‰), it has the lowest density of “lively”-related adjectives of all. Similarly, it is much more related to “quiet” (2.18‰) than to “noisy” (0.36‰). Pyrenees has by far the highest density of words related to quietness and the lowest density of all of words related to noisiness. Pyrenees is also said to be “orderly” (0.54‰) and not “chaotic” (0.18‰). This means that Pyrenees is especially related to calmness, quietness and harmony, probably inspired by its nature. In this way, Pyrenees is only described as “clean” (0.18‰) and not at all “dirty”, which can also be due to its unspoilt nature and landscape. Similarly, it is only related to “relax” and relaxation (0.73‰).

Concerning its authenticity or inauthenticity, it is described as being only “authentic” 1.27‰. In this regard, Pyrenees has the second highest density of adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (5.81‰) if compared both to the Catalan average and to the adjectives related to “new/fashionable” (1.09‰). This may be related to its old-authentic monuments, churches, traditions, etc.

Unlike the previous brands, Pyrenees and its elements are only described as “cheap” (0.18‰). We observed that adjectives related to cheap or expensive are hardly used at all, probably due to the fact that nature-related tourism does not entail many economic transactions. In the same line, the highest densities of words related to “modest/poor” (1.09‰) and words related to “luxurious/wealthy” (0.18‰) are much less dense.

Remarkably, if compared to other brands Pyrenees, is only described as being “safe” (0.36‰), no references are made to lack of safety (0.00‰). Pyrenees is seen as a safe brand territory.

- Terres de l'Ebre (tEbre)

It is necessary to note that because of the little travel blogs and reviews about Terres de l'Ebre, results may not be significant. In general this brand is especially described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as Love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, lively, orderly, authentic, clean and authentic), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (noisy, full, distress expensive).

Terres de l'Ebre has more than eight times more “good feelings” (37.60‰) than “bad feelings” (4.34‰). “Bad feelings” are especially low for this brand, the second lowest of all. In the same line, we can observe that Terres de l'Ebre has many positive adjectives for which their negative counterparts are non-existent (having densities of 0.00‰). This is the case of “love” (2.17‰) vs. “hate”, “beautiful” (2.89‰) vs. “ugly”, “pleasant” (0.72‰) vs. “unpleasant”, “friendly” (2.17‰), which is the highest density of this adjective of all brands, vs. “unfriendly”, “fun/interesting” (2.89‰), which is the lowest of all brands, vs. “boring”, “lively” (2.17‰) vs. “gloomy”, “orderly” (1.45‰) vs. “chaotic” and “clean” (0.72‰) vs. “dirty”.

Differently, it is only related with being “noisy” (0.72‰) and equally described as being “full” (1.45‰) and “empty” (1.45‰). It has the highest concentration of words related to “empty”

of all brands. Similarly it is equally related to “relax” (0.72‰) and to “distress” (0.72‰). It seems to be the brand with a higher density of adjectives related to distress. However, these results may be due to the little blog entries available.

This brand stands out for being described as only “authentic” 2.17‰ with the higher density of words related to authenticity of all brands. Terres de l’Ebre is considered the most authentic brand of all. Moreover, Terres de l’Ebre has a high density of adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (6.51‰) if compared both to the Catalan average and to the adjectives related to “new/fashionable” (3.62‰) which are also well above average.

Unlike some previous brands, Terres de l’Ebre and its elements are considered to be more “expensive” (1.45‰) than “cheap” (0.72‰).

In the case of Terres de l’Ebre adjectives related to “safe” have the highest density of all brands (0.72‰). No “unsafe”-related adjectives are found. Terres de l’Ebre is described as the safest place.

- Terres de Lleida (tLlei)

Before starting to explain this brand it is necessary to note that because of the few travel blogs and reviews about it, results may not be significant. In general, Terres de Lleida are especially described with more good feelings and positive adjectives (such as love, beautiful, pleasant, friendly, fun/interesting, lively, quiet, authentic, relax and safe), but also with adjectives that may have negative connotations (full, chaotic, expensive and modest/poor).

Despite being described four times more with “good feelings” (30.32‰) than “bad feelings” (7.40‰), Terres de Lleida has the lowest density of “good feelings” of all brands and one of the highest concentrations of “bad feelings”, meaning that although good feelings are clearly superior, the distance between good and bad feelings is the shortest of all brands.

We can observe that Terres de l’Ebre has some positive adjectives for which its negative counterparts are non-existent. This is the case of “love” (2.62‰) vs. “hate”, “beautiful” (5.55‰) vs. “ugly”, “pleasant” (0.62‰) vs. “unpleasant” and “friendly” (0.77‰) vs. “unfriendly”.

Besides, it is much more related to “quiet” (1.85‰) than to “noisy” (0.46‰). It is the second brand most strongly related with quietness, after Pyrenees. Remarkably the density of “full” is the lowest density of all brands. Besides, it is only described as “chaotic” (0.46‰) and not “orderly”. These seemingly contradictory aspects may be due to the lack of files for analysis.

In respect of its authenticity or inauthenticity, it is described as being only “authentic” (2.00‰) (not inauthentic). Quite unlike the other brands, Terres de Lleida has a high density of adjectives related to “new/fashionable” (3.70‰), the highest of all brands, which is higher than the adjectives related to “old/old-fashioned” (2.62‰).

Unlike some of the previous brands, Terres de Lleida and its elements are considered to be more “expensive” (1.23‰) than “cheap” (0.62‰), but more “modest/poor” (1.39‰) than “luxurious/wealthy” (0.46‰).

In the case of Terres de Lleida, it is only described with adjectives related to “safe” (0.31‰), it is not described as “unsafe” at all. Safety issues do not matter to bloggers visiting this brand.

Table 3.54
Feelings and dichotomies by brands (‰)

Attraction factor	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	CAT
Good feelings	38.48	32.07	31.26	34.23	51.67	44.83	37.60	30.23	37.80‰
Bad feelings	7.71	6.67	5.12	6.54	7.75	3.63	4.34	7.40	7.73‰
Love	2.50	1.67	1.68	2.16	3.15	1.45	2.17	2.62	2.50‰
Hate	0.19	0.10	0.15	0.13	0.09	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.17‰
Beautiful	6.12	8.49	6.55	7.38	4.09	11.8	2.89	5.55	6.02‰
Ugly	0.11	0.08	0.15	0.06	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.12‰
Pleasant	0.86	0.48	1.02	0.82	0.67	1.27	0.72	0.62	0.86‰
Unpleasant	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.12	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.11‰
Friendly	0.48	0.08	0.68	0.57	1.59	0.73	2.17	0.77	0.51‰
Unfriendly	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Fun/interesting	6.01	3.51	4.68	4.59	6.71	7.99	2.89	4.16	5.69‰
Boring	0.36	0.33	0.46	0.43	0.53	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.39‰
Lively	0.63	0.23	0.58	0.43	0.49	0.18	2.17	0.46	0.60‰
Gloomy	0.16	0.33	0.12	0.21	0.15	0.18	0.00	0.15	0.17‰
Quiet	0.58	1.06	0.73	1.13	0.86	2.18	0.00	1.85	0.66‰
Noisy	0.87	0.38	0.99	0.71	1.14	0.36	0.72	0.46	0.88‰
Empty	0.21	0.23	0.31	0.25	0.47	0.36	1.45	0.46	0.22‰
Full	1.76	1.90	1.70	1.30	1.26	2.36	1.45	1.08	1.66‰
Orderly	0.46	0.40	0.39	0.40	0.25	0.54	1.45	0.00	0.42‰
Chaotic	0.30	0.28	0.12	0.32	0.13	0.18	0.00	0.46	0.29‰
Clean	0.37	0.35	0.77	0.70	0.66	0.18	0.72	0.15	0.42‰
Dirty	0.42	0.91	0.12	0.12	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.38‰
Relax	1.40	0.71	2.11	1.45	1.46	0.73	0.72	1.39	1.41‰
Distress	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.08	0.00	0.72	0.15	0.12‰
Authentic	2.08	1.52	1.10	1.55	1.94	1.27	2.17	2.00	2.04‰
Inauthentic	0.23	0.13	0.27	0.26	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.23‰
New/Fashionable	2.12	1.16	1.99	1.79	1.38	1.09	3.62	3.70	2.07‰
Old/old-fashioned	2.47	2.68	4.52	6.48	5.29	5.81	6.51	2.62	2.89‰
Cheap	0.88	0.43	0.79	0.57	1.09	0.18	0.72	0.62	0.89‰
Expensive	0.77	0.28	0.52	0.33	1.56	0.00	1.45	1.23	0.73‰
Modest/poor	0.53	0.40	0.31	0.56	0.70	1.09	0.00	1.39	0.56‰
Luxurious/wealthy	0.28	0.15	0.12	0.14	0.07	0.18	0.00	0.46	0.27‰
Safe	0.27	0.20	0.21	0.33	0.36	0.18	0.72	0.31	0.28‰
Unsafe	0.84	0.25	0.35	0.39	0.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.77‰

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

3.2.2.3. Cultural, linguistic and geographical identities by brands

It is important to note that the most prominent cultural, linguistic and geographical identity for all brands is Spanish identity. The two brands with a more prominent Spanish identity are Terres de Lleida (15.89‰) and Terres de l'Ebre (10.12‰), way above average. However, these results may not be significant due to the low quantity of blog and review entries for these two brands. Then come Costa Barcelona (8.41‰), Costa Brava (8.41‰) and Barcelona (7.53‰). The Costa Daurada brand has the lowest density of words related to Spanish identity (4.48‰).

Then, for all the brands, the second most prominent identity is Catalan. The brand with the highest number of references to Catalan identity is Pyrenees (3.81‰), followed by Catalunya

Central (3.34%) and Costa Barcelona (2.61%). Costa Daurada is the brand with the lowest density of words related to a Catalan cultural, linguistic and geographical identity (1.56%).

Mediterranean cultural and geographical identity is especially prominent for the brands with a coastal area. Costa Barcelona is the brand with the greatest density of Mediterranean identity (1.57%), followed by Costa Daurada (1.41%), Costa Brava (0.76%) and Barcelona (0.54%). It is usually placed in the third or fourth place for identity background density.

European identity is usually placed in third or fourth position for identity background. European identity is most prominent in Catalunya Central (2.00%), followed by Barcelona (1.28%) and Costa Brava (0.88%).

Global identity always comes in fifth and last position relative to the other cultural identities. The brands that are ascribed this identity are only the most touristy coastal ones: Costa Barcelona (0.41%), Barcelona (0.29%), Costa Brava (0.19%) and Costa Daurada (0.13%).

In general we observe that Spanish cultural, geographic and linguistic identity dominates. Catalan identity is much less mentioned, and usually accounts for about one half of the density of Spanish identity. The order in which most brands (Barcelona, Catalunya Central, Costa Brava, Pyrenees, Terres de l'Ebre and Terres de Lleida) are identified is first as Spanish, then as Catalan, then as European, then as Mediterranean and finally as Global. Exceptions to this are Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada, which are identified first as Spanish, then as Catalan, then as Mediterranean, then as European and finally as Global.

Table 3.55

Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references per Catalan brands (%)

Attraction factor	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	CAT
Catalan	3.58	4.04	4.31	3.82	1.56	5.81	4.34	3.08	3.82‰
Spanish	7.53	6.47	8.41	8.41	4.84	7.62	10.12	15.89	7.71‰
Mediterranean	0.54	0.15	1.57	0.76	1.41	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.59‰
European	1.28	2.00	0.73	0.88	0.69	0.73	0.72	0.15	1.33‰
Global	0.29	0.00	0.41	0.19	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.28‰

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

- Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music by brands

In the first place it should be noted that some cultural identity elements will not be commented on as their densities are very low. These are, within events and traditions: "aplec", "Patum" and "Fira del Teatre", "Feria de Abril" and "Saint Valentine's", "rural/farming festivities". Regarding cultural identity folklore traditions these are: "correbou". Regarding dances and music these are: "accordionists" and "belly dancing".

Regarding **traditions and events**, the ones that seem to have the most presence in general are "Carnival", "religious traditions", and for some brands the "Festa major", "Sant Jordi" or "Halloween". Of these outstanding traditions, only "Sant Jordi" has a very strong Catalan identity. The other festivities such as "carnival", "religious traditions" or "festa major" are well-rooted festivities in Catalonia but are not exclusively Catalan. Finally, "Halloween" is an Anglo-Saxon celebration with international identity.

The international celebration of "Carnival" is outstandingly mentioned in Costa Barcelona (2.90‰) where the famous Sitges Carnival is celebrated. This is the highest density of a

cultural tradition in any brand. It also has a strong density in Pyrenees (1.09‰) and Barcelona (0.40‰).

The “religious traditions”, in turn, are mostly mentioned for the Barcelona brand (0.36‰) followed by Terres de Lleida (0.15‰) and Costa Barcelona (0.12‰).

The “Festa major” element is most dense in Costa Barcelona (0.46‰) followed by Barcelona (0.15‰) and Costa Daurada (0.05‰). It is in these three brands where tourists seem to talk most about festa major, especially Barcelona’s la Mercè festa major.

The “Sant Jordi” feast, the Catalan day for “lovers”, is mentioned mostly in Catalunya Central (0.20‰), then Costa Barcelona (0.10‰) and then Barcelona (0.07‰). Similarly, the “Sant Joan” festivity is mostly mentioned for Catalunya Central (0.10‰), Costa Barcelona (0.06‰) and Costa Brava (0.05‰). It seems that Catalunya Central is well-known for celebrations related to saints and Catalan festivities.

The “Castanyada” celebration, although it is a generalized Catalan tradition, it is only mentioned in Costa Barcelona (0.08‰). However, its international counterpart, “Halloween”) is present in many brands. It has its highest density in Costa Daurada (0.29‰). This high density may be due to the thematization of the PortAventura Park for Halloween. Then comes Pyrenees, with a density of 0.18‰. After that comes Costa Barcelona in which “Halloween” has a density of 0.17‰, far higher than its Catalan counterpart.

The only festival which is mentioned and is held in a specific medium-sized town, the “Tarraco viva” festival, is only mentioned in blogs and reviews about Costa Daurada, the brand territory where it is held annually (0.02‰).

Concerning **folkloric elements and traditions**, the most prominent folkloric traditions are “bullfighting”, the “siesta”, “fireworks” and “castellers”. “Bullfighting” and the “siesta” are two clear symbols of Spanish identity. “Fireworks” are well rooted in Catalonia but have an international identity. “Castellers” are the only exclusive Catalan identity symbol which is more or less strongly mentioned.

“Bullfighting”, which is a symbol of the Spanish identity, is densest in Terres de l’Ebre (4.34‰) and then in Barcelona (0.37‰). Sleeping the “siesta” is most mentioned in Terres de Lleida (0.31‰), then in Costa Barcelona (0.27‰) and in Barcelona (0.22‰).

“Fireworks”, with their Catalan but also Spanish and international identity, are most mentioned in Costa Barcelona (0.79‰), then in Costa Daurada (0.44‰) and Catalunya Central (0.18‰). Fireworks exhibitions are usually staged near the coast, which is why two coastal brands come in first place.

The “castellers”, one of the most prominent symbols of Catalan identity, is mostly mentioned in the Costa Daurada brand (0.93‰) in which this tradition was originated. Then it is also highly present in Terres de Lleida (0.46‰) and Costa Barcelona (0.37‰). This element is appreciated in these three brands where it is most strongly rooted. A tradition which usually is held along with castellers is the Catalan tradition of “Giants and Dwarfs”, which is also mostly mentioned in Costa Daurada brand (0.39‰), followed again by Terres de Lleida (0.31‰) and Costa Barcelona (0.08‰). The Catalan tradition of the “Correfocs” is again most densely mentioned in Costa Daurada (0.18‰).

It is remarkable that Barcelona is the brand most strongly associated with Spanish traditions, Costa Barcelona with Carnival and Costa Daurada with Catalan traditions.

Table 3.56

References to cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music by brands (‰)

Attraction factor	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	CAT
Festa Major	0.15	0.03	0.46	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13‰
Rural/Farming festivities	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Aplec	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Patum	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Fira del teatre	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Tarraco viva	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Religious traditions	0.36	0.03	0.12	0.05	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.28‰
Sant Joan	0.01	0.10	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Sant Jordi	0.07	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06‰
Castanyada	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Saint Valentine	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Halloween	0.03	0.00	0.17	0.01	0.29	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.05‰
Carnival	0.40	0.05	2.90	0.18	0.29	1.09	0.00	0.31	0.43‰
Feria de abril	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Castellers	0.13	0.00	0.37	0.01	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.16‰
Correbou	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Giants and dwarfs	0.07	0.00	0.08	0.05	0.39	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.08‰
Correfoc	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05‰
Fireworks	0.11	0.18	0.79	0.15	0.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17‰
Siesta	0.22	0.08	0.27	0.18	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.23‰
Bullfighting	0.37	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.00	4.34	0.00	0.33‰
Accordionists	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Traditional Catalan dances	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Sardana	0.10	0.03	0.00	0.06	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0,09‰
Flamenco	0.70	0.10	0.17	0.12	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0,59‰
Spanish Guitar	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.12	0.04	0.18	0.00	0.00	0,15‰
Ballet	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Belly dancing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Salsa	0.09	0.10	0.27	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0,09‰

Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

Regarding **dances and music**, as shown in Table 3.56, the densest element of all is by far “Flamenco”, with a clearly Spanish identity, then “Spanish guitar” and “salsa” are also mentioned. Catalan dances such as “Sardana” are hardly mentioned in comparison. It is remarkable that in the case of dances and music, it is the ones that are most related to Spanish identity which are most mentioned.

“Flamenco” dancing is stongly present for Barcelona brand (0.70‰), seven times more than the “sardana”. It is also strongly present in Costa Barcelona (0.17‰), Costa Brava (0.12‰) and Catalunya Central (0.10‰). The “Spanish guitar” is mostly mentioned in Costa Daurada (0.18‰), followed by Barcelona and Costa Barcelona, where it has a density of 0.015‰.

“Salsa”, a typical Latin dance usually identified with Latin countries, has its highest presence in Costa Barcelona (0.27‰), followed by Catalunya Central (0.10‰) and Barcelona (0.09‰).

In general we see that dances and music with a strong Spanish or international identity are related mainly to Barcelona. The “sardana”, which is the most emblematic Catalan dance conveying strong Catalan identity, is mostly present in Barcelona (0.10‰) and Costa Daurada (0.10‰), followed by Costa Brava (0.06‰).

- Cuisine and drinks

Cuisine and drink elements also have different cultural identity backgrounds. The elements of cuisine that are most mentioned are “tapas”, “seafood and fish”, “International fast food” and “paella”. As can be observed, “tapas” and “paella” are symbols of Spanish cuisine, “Seafood and fish” are traditional in Catalonia but also throughout the Mediterranean basin. Finally, “international fast food” conveys a global identity. No exclusively Catalan dishes are remarkably mentioned at all.

Regarding **cuisine**, “Tapas”, typical Spanish dishes, have the highest average density of all and are especially prominent in the case of Barcelona (1.61‰), followed by the Costa Barcelona (1.35‰).

“Seafood and fish”, a Catalan, Spanish and Mediterranean speciality, are mostly mentioned in Coastal brands where fresh products are caught: The highest density is found in Terres de l’Ebre (1.45‰), then Barcelona (1.27‰), Costa Barcelona (1.14‰) and Costa Brava (0.82‰).

“International fast food” is very densely mentioned especially in Costa Barcelona (0.99‰) and Barcelona (0.89‰), probably due to the fact that it comprises or surrounds the big city of Barcelona where many multinational fast food chains can be found.

“Paella”, probably the most famous Spanish dish, is the only single dish mentioned considerably. It is most dense in Terres de l’Ebre (0.72‰) and Barcelona (0.57‰). Besides, other dishes conveying Spanish identity are mostly mentioned in Barcelona (“Spanish tortilla”, “Gazpacho” and “Churros”).

“Olive oil”, a fundamental ingredient for Catalan and Mediterranean cuisine, is importantly mentioned in Pyrenees (0.73‰), followed by Terres de l’Ebre (0.72‰) and Terres de Lleida (0.46‰). “Fresh fruit and vegetables”, also Mediterranean products, are mostly associated with Barcelona (0.10‰) and Costa Brava (0.07‰).

Cuisine dishes or foods conveying a distinctive Catalan identity are hardly mentioned. For example “Bread with tomato”, the most famous Catalan dish, is only mentioned in Barcelona (0.04‰) and Costa Daurada (0.01‰). Other Catalan foods are only mentioned to some extent in brands specializing in them. This is the case of “Catalan meat dishes” in Costa Brava (0.08‰), “Catalan sausages” in Catalunya Central (0.05‰), “Calçots” in the Costa Barcelona (0.04‰) and in Costa Daurada (0.03‰) where the tradition comes from, “Catalan protected origin vegetables” and “mushrooms” in Pyrenees (0.73‰), “snails” in Pyrenees (0.73‰) and Terres de Lleida (0.46‰) where they are a very traditional cooking ingredient, “Nuts”, mostly mentioned in Costa Daurada (0.15‰) where they are especially cultivated, “Embotit” in Terres de Lleida (0.46‰), which has the highest density of this product. This region is famous for its cold meat products, etc. Similarly, “famous Catalan cooks” are associated first to Costa Brava (0.05‰) where many of the most famous Catalan haute cuisine restaurants are located, and also in Catalunya central (0.03‰).

Table 3.57

References to specific cuisine and drinks with different cultural origins by brands (‰)

Attraction factor	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	tEbre	tLlei	CAT
Bread with tomato	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03‰
Olive oil	0.16	0.08	0.35	0.22	0.15	0.73	0.72	0.46	0.17‰
Seafood and fish	1.27	0.38	1.14	0.82	0.49	0.18	1.45	0.62	1.16‰
Catalan meat dishes	0.03	0.00	0.08	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03‰
Catalan sausages	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Catalan soups	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Calçots	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Catalan mixed vegetables	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Catalan protected origin vegetables	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Mushrooms	0.07	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.02	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Bunyols	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Snails	0.03	0.00	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.73	0.00	0.46	0.01‰
Catalan Sauces	0.01	0.00	0.17	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07‰
Catalan Desserts	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00‰
Catalan Pastries	0.01	0.00	0.17	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04‰
Nuts	0.12	0.05	0.02	0.10	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11‰
Fresh Fruit and Veg	0.10	0.00	0.02	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09‰
Famous Catalan Cooks	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01‰
Paella	0.57	0.56	0.46	0.15	0.17	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.53‰
Tapas	1.61	0.43	1.35	0.46	0.35	0.73	0.00	0.46	1.45‰
Spanish Tortilla	0.12	0.00	0.08	0.03	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10‰
Embotit	0.33	0.10	0.37	0.14	0.13	0.18	0.00	0.46	0.33‰
Gazpacho	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03‰
Churro	0.12	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11‰
Breads	0.40	0.18	0.41	0.32	0.15	0.18	0.00	0.15	0.39‰
International Fast Food	0.89	0.43	0.99	0.37	0.74	0.73	0.72	0.31	0.83‰
European food	0.19	0.03	0.31	0.16	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21‰
Asian food	0.14	0.03	0.27	0.10	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14‰
Cava	0.30	0.35	3.69	0.10	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.35‰
Wine	1.00	0.81	3.56	0.76	1.13	0.73	1.45	1.39	1.07‰
Spanish popular drinks	0.66	0.28	0.19	0.22	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.62‰
Champagne	0.10	0.08	0.35	0.04	0.20	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.11‰
Beer	0.84	0.56	0.95	0.60	1.25	0.18	0.00	0.15	0.88‰
Spirits	0.22	0.08	0.27	0.07	0.21	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.21‰
International Refreshments	0.11	0.05	0.10	0.05	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.12‰
Fruit drinks	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08‰

Database: Database: 23,435 travel blog and review files in English

It seems, in general, that international food (such as breads, European and Asian food) is most concentrated in Costa Barcelona. In general, dishes related to a more Spanish identity are located in Barcelona. In general, dishes related to Catalan identity are less present than the dishes with Spanish identity and international identity and are more localized in the rest of the brands.

Regarding **drinks**, the four products most mentioned on average are: “wine”, “beer”, “Spanish popular drinks” and “cava”. At first sight we observe that wine, although having a strong Catalan identity, it is also a Spanish and Mediterranean drink in general, “beer” conveys a clear global identity, whilst “Spanish popular drinks” (such as sangría) convey a strong Spanish identity. The only Catalan-specific drink strongly mentioned by bloggers is “Cava”.

Both “winery” (3.56‰) and “cava” (3.69‰) are most present by far in Costa Barcelona because this brand territory comprises the Penedès region, the major region of cava production and also of wine production. “Wine” is more widespread among the brands and it is located in Terres de l’Ebre (1.45‰) and Terres de Lleida (1.39‰). “Champagne”, which is the international way of calling cava, is much less mentioned than this. It is also mostly mentioned in Costa Barcelona (0.35‰).

“Beer” in turn is mostly mentioned in three brands famous for their nightlife: Costa Brava (1.25‰), Costa Barcelona (0.95‰) and Barcelona (0.84‰). Popular Spanish alcoholic drinks such as sangría and calimocha, are mainly mentioned in the Barcelona brand (0.66‰). In this case “Spanish popular drinks” and “International drinks” (beer, spirits and international refreshments) are strongly associated with Barcelona whilst winery and cava (the latter an exclusively Catalan drink) are associated with Costa Barcelona.

3.2.3. Spatial indexes of attraction factors according to travel blogs and reviews

At this point, we observed that the geolocated information obtained about attraction factors in absolute numbers for each brand may be insufficient and different from what was expected in the first place. Some categories seemed to have similar presence in most of the brands although each of the territories has different attraction factors. The information in absolute numbers (percentages and site-wide density of each category relative to a specific brand), especially concerning attraction factors, does not reflect the brand’s specialization, the location or concentration of certain attraction factors, diversification, etc. in certain brand territories relative to the rest of the brand territories and the whole territory of Catalonia studied.

Hence, regional location, sectorial location, diversification and specialization measures were calculated only in the case of attraction factors relative to each brand and to the rest of the brand’s territory. These measures are specific geographical measures that usually work with economic sectors or activities, and regions. In this case they were adapted to the present case of study which works with words and categories. Basically, we related the territory of the brands (regions) with attraction factor groups or identity elements (sectors or activities), which has never been done before (as far as we are aware). The basic input data to calculate the coefficients were the total word counts for each category and each brand territory.

In the case of Catalonia, some of the brand territories had no or very few entries and only regions with a significant number of entries were used to perform the measurements and to achieve clearer results. The location and specialization measures were only calculated for 6 of the eight brands. Terres de Lleida and Terres de l’Ebre were not included since they have very few blog and review entries and the results would not be significant. Therefore, the

database used for the analysis is smaller: 23,387 blog and review entries in English classified by travellers according to different destinations.

The first table, 3.58, gathers the total number of words counted for each category within each brand. As can be observed, the brand with the greatest volume of information and entries (which is reflected in a higher number of words counted within categories) is Barcelona (Barna), and the one with the lowest volume of information, entries and words gathered is Pyrenees (Pyren). In terms of categories, the category with the most words within it is “tangible heritage” and the one with the least words is “intangible heritage”.

Spatial indexes were calculated both for the eight general attraction factors (see tables 3.54 and 3.55) and the 31 specific attraction factors (all their subcategories) (see tables 3.56, 3.57). Three of the four measures (Location Quotient, Coefficient of Specialization and Coefficient of Diversification) were explained using the brands’ geographical basis. The location coefficient by modality, as its name indicates, will be explained by attraction factors and not by brands. Tables 3.54 and 3.60 show the basic sources of information through which the spatial indexes are obtained for the eight general attraction factors (Table 3.58) and the 31 detailed attraction factors (Table 3.60). The results of the different spatial measures can be found in tables 3.59 (eight attraction factors) and 3.61 (31 attraction factors).

- Barcelona (Barna)

- **Location quotient by brand:** If we take a general look at the location quotient of the different attraction factors per brand we observe that Barcelona has quotients very close to 1, which is the mean for the total region (Catalonia). This is explained because Barcelona entries and reviews represent a very high percentage of the total entries and reviews for Catalonia (approximately 82.5%), and approximately 85% of the classified words belong to this brand. Therefore, as the majority of entries about Catalonia are from the Barcelona brand, it is normal that its results are close to the mean of the total region of Catalonia.

In spite of this, it can be observed that some attraction factors are slightly more present in Barcelona than average. These are, first 5. “Sports” (1.088), in which 5.2 “Sporting events/watching” (1.106) and 5.1 “Football club Barcelona” (1.103) are especially concentrated. Second, comes 8. “Urban environment” (1.054), of which, as expected, 8.2 “Barcelona attractions” (1.130) are the most concentrated. Third comes 7. “Tangible heritage” (1.017) of which the most concentrated subfactor is 7.2 “Gaudí” (1.137). Gaudí is practically only concentrated in the Barcelona brand.

By contrast, some attraction factors are slightly less located in Barcelona than average: 4. “Nature and active Tourism” (0.850), of which 4.3 “rural landscape” (0.775) is the least concentrated in this brand, and 6. “Sun, Sea and Sand” (0.871).

- **Coefficient of Specialization:** We can observe that Barcelona has a very low Coefficient of Specialization, which is by far the lowest of all brands. This coefficient measures the specialization of a brand in certain types of attraction factors in comparison to the average for the whole region of Catalonia. In the case of Barcelona, the coefficient is very close to 0, which means that the brand region has the same composition as the totality of the regions

(Catalonia), that is to say, that it is not in general much more or less specialized in relative terms in any attraction factor.

Again, this low specialization is explained by the fact that most entries of blogs and reviews belong to this brand, and therefore as its location quotients are close to average it is not found to be a brand specialized in a specific factor. This coefficient is of only 0.022 in the case of Table 3.59 for the eight major categories, and slightly higher in the case of Table 3.61 with all the subcategories, 0.043 (it can be expected that some subcategories, as they refer to more specific factors, may be further from the mean of all Catalonia, and therefore the coefficient is slightly higher).

- **Coefficient of Diversification:** The coefficient of diversification of Barcelona is 0.559 in the case of the eight categories, and 0.562 in the case of the 31 subcategories. At first sight we could say that because this coefficient is closer to 1 than to 0, this means that the degree of diversification of the attraction factors of Barcelona is low in general. This means that in the case of Table 3.59 with eight attraction factors and Table 3.61 with 31 attraction factors, Barcelona attraction factors are more of specific types (and not of all types).

Besides, if compared to the other brands, in the case of the table with eight attraction factors it is the third lowest brand for diversification but, conversely, in the case of the 31 categories, Barcelona is the third brand with the most diverse attraction factors. The Barcelona brand itself does not change much in terms of diversification in either case (8 or 31 categories) but it changes position considerably if compared to other brands.

- Catalunya Central (CatCe)

- **Location quotient:** At first sight we see that the location of the different attraction factors in this brand is very different from Barcelona. Catalunya Central is one of the brands with most extremes in attraction factor locations (some of the factors are very highly concentrated and some are very little concentrated).

On the one hand, we must stress that category 4. “Nature and active tourism” is very highly concentrated in this brand (5.406). It is more than five times more concentrated here than average. Within this category we see that the most concentrated elements are 4.2 “Nature sports and active tourism” (7.123), seven times more than average, and 4.1 “nature elements and places” (5.564), five and a half times more than average. We can also see that 7. “Tangible Heritage” is slightly more concentrated in this brand than average (1.077), it is the brand with the second highest concentration of this factor, it has the highest location of subfactor 7.10 “religious heritage” (4.779).

On the other hand, we observe that the rest of the attraction factors are less located or concentrated in this brand than average. The category or attraction factor which is least concentrated in this brand is 6. “Sun sea and sand” (0.362), whose low concentration is the second lowest of all brands. Then comes the sports category (0.486), which is the second least concentrated factor. Then, from the least to the most concentrations come 2. “Intangible heritage” (0.505), which is the lowest concentration of this factor among all brands, 3. “leisure and recreation”, which is the second lowest concentration of this factor among the brands, among which 3.2 “Theatre, spectacles cinema and music” is highly concentrated (1.437) but other subfactors such as 3.3 “Theme parks” are very lowly

concentrated here (0.113). Then comes 1. “Food and wine” (0.602), which is the lowest concentration of this attraction factor of all brands, of which 1.1 “food and drinks” are the least located in this brand (0.540). Then, with slightly more concentration, comes 8. “Urban environment” (0.752) with a low concentration in this brand.

- **Coefficient of specialization:** The coefficient of specialization of this brand is 0.201 in the case of Table 3.59 with eight categories. This percentage shows a relatively higher specialization of the brand than Barcelona, but not very high specialization (the third lowest) relative to the whole region of Catalonia. However, if we take into account the 31 subcategories we observe that the coefficient of specialization more than doubles (0.446) becoming the second most specialized brand in certain subcategories, which means that Catalunya Central brand is especially specialized in some subcategories if compared to the whole region of Catalonia and to other brands.

- **Coefficient of diversification:** In the case of Table 3.59 with the eight main categories, CatCe has the lowest diversification coefficient (0.603) of all brands, which means that this brand is specialized in certain types attraction factors. This low diversification is even more accentuated if we consider Table 3.61 with the 31 subcategories (0.755), which also represents the lowest diversification among the brands. This means again that CatCe must be specialized in certain specific types of categories.

- Costa Barcelona (cBarc)

- **Location quotient:** This brand is also a brand with disparate quotients of attraction factor location. We observe that some of the categories of attraction factors are considerably above the mean for the whole region of Catalonia. Indeed, it has the highest concentration of all brands of 6. “Sun, sea and sand”, 2. “Intangible heritage” and 1. “Food and wine”. These categories are, in this order, 6. “Sun, sea and sand” (3.307), which is more than three times more concentrated in this brand than average. It is by far the brand with the highest concentration of sun, sea and sand-related words of all brands. Then comes “intangible heritage” (2.592), which is also highly concentrated or located in this brand. It is also, by far, the highest concentration of intangible heritage-related words among all brands. After that comes 1. “Food and wine”, which is almost as much as twice concentrated in this brand than average. In this case, again, it is the highest concentration of this attraction factor among all brands. It is very remarkable that within this category, the 1.2 “Wine” subcategory has the highest location quotient of all brands (7.001), seven times higher than average. Then this brand has a slightly higher concentration of 3. “Leisure and recreation” than average (1.174), within this category, the highest concentration corresponding to 3.1 “nightlife and partying” (1.576).

On the other hand, we can see that some of the categories are less concentrated in this brand region than average. One of them, “tangible heritage”, has the lowest concentration of all brands. Indeed 7. “tangible heritage” is the element least located in Costa Barcelona brand (0.513). Then comes 8. “Urban environment” (0.618), which also has a considerably low concentration. This is followed by 5. “Sports”, which though less concentrated than average is the most concentrated after Barcelona. Finally comes 4. “Nature and active tourism” (0.959), which is slightly less concentrated in this brand than average.

- **Coefficient of specialization:** As could be expected given that many of the location quotients of different attraction factors are the highest or lowest of all, this brand is the most specialized in specific attraction factor categories of all (0.308) if we look at the eight category Table 3.59. However, if we look at the 31 subcategory table 3.61 we see that the coefficient of specialization is slightly higher (0.332), but in relation to the other brands it is now one of the lowest. This difference may be due to the fact that the other brands are more specialized in certain subcategories or subfactors, and that Costa de Barcelona is, for instance, specialized in two categories (6. and 2.) which have no subcategories.

- **Coefficient of diversification:** If we consider Table 3.59 with the eight main categories, Costa Barcelona brand is the most diverse brand of all (0.318) which indicates that it is not identified with some very specific categories but with most of them. However, if we observe Table 3.61 with the 31 subcategories, we see that this brand becomes one of the least diverse if we compare it to others. This probably means that when the subcategories are deployed, this brand is not so diverse and its categories are only of a certain specific type and not of all types.

- Costa Brava (cBrav)

- **Location quotient:** The location quotients of the different attraction factors of Costa Brava brand stand out more for some low concentrations and not for very high concentrations of certain elements.

Starting with the attraction factors that are more concentrated than average, we see in the first place that 6. "Sun, sea, and sand" is the factor most concentrated in this brand. It is, after Catalunya Central, the brand with the highest concentration of the sun and beach factors. This is significant because, when we saw the absolute percentages of presence of words related to certain attraction factors, 7. "Cultural heritage" was first, but in terms of concentration in relation to the average for Catalonia, the element of sun, sea and sand is now the first. These data fit much better with the expected or established image of the brand, strongly related to coastal tourism. After this element, comes attraction factor 4. "Nature and active tourism" (1.628), which is also more concentrated in this brand than average. Although it is not one of the highest quotients of location of the nature and active tourism element, it is the highest concentration of this element among the coastal brands. This also fits better with the initial image of the brand which become famous in part because of the wildness and natural beauty of its coast. Within this category, 4.3 "Rural landscape" is the most highly concentrated (2.964). Then, comes category 7. "Tangible heritage", which is slightly higher than average (1.083), but that in fact it is the brand with the highest concentration of this element of all. Within this category, the highest concentrations of subcategories can be seen in 7.3 "artists" (4.299), probably related to Dalí, which is by far the highest concentration of all brands, and 7.6 "Archaeological sites" (3.682), probably related to the ruins of Empúries.

Regarding the attraction factors that are less located than average in this brand, attraction factor 5. "Sports" is the least concentrated (0.283). In fact, it is in the Costa Brava brand where the words related to sports in general are least located in comparison to the other brands. Of this category, 5.1 "FC Barcelona" is the least located in this brand (0.080). Then comes 2. "Intangible heritage", which also has the second lowest concentration (0.545) of all

brands in Costa Brava. Category 8. "Urban environment" is also much less concentrated in Costa Brava than average (0.642). In spite of this, subcategory 8.3 "other city attractions" is very concentrated in Costa Brava (9.743), becoming the brand where this subcategory is most located in relative terms. Then comes category 1. "Food and wine" which is considerably low (0.698) despite the wide range of food and wine in the region. Finally comes category 3. "Leisure and recreation", which is slightly lower than average.

- **Coefficient of specialization:** The Costa Brava brand region is the second least specialized brand in certain attraction factors if we look at table 3.59 with the eight main categories (0.133). Therefore, we can say that in general, the attraction factors of Costa Brava are quite similar to the average for the whole of Catalonia. Besides, if we take into account the 31 subcategory table 3.61 we can see that this brand becomes slightly more specialized (0.351) in certain subcategories, but that in general, relative to other brands it is the third lowest in specialization.

- **Coefficient of diversification:** If we observe both the coefficients of diversification in table 3.59 with the eight major categories (0.586) and table 3.61 with the 31 subcategories (0.550) we can see that the Costa Brava brand has a coefficient of diversification above 0.5 (which could be considered low). Then comes an apparently contradictory result. If we observe the coefficients of diversification for this brand in relation to the other brands, we see very different results. According to table 3.59 with the eight main categories, the Costa Brava brand is the second least diversified, meaning that it is specialized in specific categories among these eight, but if we look at table 3.61 with the 31 categories and subcategories, if compared with the other brands, it becomes the most diversified of all. This means that the Costa Brava brand has the greatest diversification of attraction factors mentioned of all if we consider the subcategories. This can probably be explained because although in general categories (8) Costa Brava is in relative terms less diverse, and hence concentrated in certain types of categories, when the categories are deployed and subcategories are taken into account Costa Brava seems to be more diverse than the others because probably all subcategories have some presence, which may not occur with other brands.

- Costa Daurada (cDaur)

- **Location quotient:** The Costa Daurada brand, at first sight, is a brand with more contrasts among the different location quotients of the attraction factors than the Costa Brava and Barcelona. Some of the categories are more located in this brand than average. The attraction factor in which Costa Daurada is highly specialized is 3. "Leisure and recreation" (2.964), in which these elements appear three times more than average. These results confirm what was previously commented about the brand: that its most remarkable element or specialization is 3. "leisure and recreation", in spite of tangible heritage being the category most present in absolute numbers, the highest specialization of this brand, if compared to the other brands, is the leisure and recreation attraction factor. Within this category, subcategory 3.3 "Theme parks" has an extraordinarily high concentration of 10.084 (10 times more than average in relative terms). This is probably due to the presence of PortAventura theme park in this brand. Moreover, within the leisure and recreation category we find another high concentration of 3.1 "nightlife and partying" of 2.506. In second place comes 6. "Sun, sea and sand" (1.784), in which the brand is also specialized although slightly less than the other coastal brands. Then comes 2. "Intangible heritage"

(1.674) which is located in Costa Daurada more than average. It is the second brand with the highest concentration of this attraction factor. After that comes 4. "Nature and active tourism" (1.379), which is slightly more located in Costa Daurada than in the whole region of Catalonia. Although it is not a high concentration it shows a small concentration that was not reflected with the absolute counts of words within this category for this brand. Within this category the most strongly located subfactor in Costa Daurada is 4.3 "rural landscape" (2.572).

On the other hand, some of the categories are less concentrated than average. The attraction factor with the lowest concentration in this brand is 5. "Sports", which is the second lowest and shows that words related to sports are very little located in this brand. However, subfactor 5.3 "other sports" is notably concentrated in Costa Daurada (2.319) because of the presence of golf. Then, 8. "Urban environment" (0.547) is also very little located in this brand, in fact this brand has the lowest concentration of this element of all. However, subcategory 8.3 "other city attractions" has a very high concentration in this brand (7.273). Then comes "tangible heritage" (0.685) which has the second lowest concentration in this brand if compared to the total average for Catalonia. This result contradicts the data showing that the category most present in absolute numbers of word counts is tangible heritage. But again, despite the global low concentration, some subcategories are highly present: this is the case of 7.6 "Archaeological sites" (7.961), which is by far more located in this brand than in any other. Finally 1. "Food and wine" is slightly less present than average.

- **Coefficient of specialization:** The Costa Daurada brand has a coefficient of specialization of 0.263 if we consider Table 3.59 with the eight categories and a slightly higher coefficient if we consider Table 3.61 with the 31 subcategories (0.367). Both of them show a low specialization in certain attraction factors as they are closer to 0 than to 1. In relative terms, in both cases, it is the third brand most specialized in certain attraction factors and subfactors.

- **Coefficient of Diversification:** The coefficient of diversification for Costa Daurada is 0.412 in the case of Table 3.59 with the eight categories. It is the second lowest coefficient of diversification of all brands and it is closer to 0 than to 1, which means that the brand is actually the second most diverse, and least specialized in certain types of attraction factors but in many, however, if we look at table 3.61 with 31 subcategories we observe that the coefficient is higher 0.550, which means that when the subcategories are considered it is a less diverse brand, and not only that, it becomes the least diverse brand in relative terms of all brands meaning that it is specialized in very specific types of subcategories, which could not be perceived with the general eight categories.

- Pyrenees (Pyren)

- **Location quotient:** Pyrenees is perhaps the brand in which the extremes of high and low concentration are most visible. Above the mean only comes attraction factor 4. "Nature and active tourism" with a quotient of 8.428. This quotient shows the highest concentration of nature and active tourism of all brands in Pyrenees. This quotient is actually the highest concentration of any attraction factor in any brand if we take into consideration table 3.59 with the eight main attraction factors. The nature and active tourism element is more than eight times more frequent than in Catalonia on average. If we divide this group into

subcategories we can see that the four groups are the most present of all brands in relative terms too. The most concentrated in Pyrenees is 4.2 “nature sports and active tourism” (11.508), then 4.2 “Nature elements and places” (8.512), 4.4 “nature remaining words” (5.552) and 4.3 “Rural landscape” (5.003).

The remaining attraction factors are all below the mean (1). The lowest concentration of an element is 6. “Sun, sea and sand” (0.334). It is the brand with the lowest location of this attraction factor. Then comes category 5. “Sports” (0.450), which has a low concentration in this brand, as the majority of sports done there are nature sports (which belong to category 4). In spite of that, subcategory 5.3 “other sports” is strongly concentrated in this brand (4.598). After that comes 2. “leisure and recreation” (0.518), which is also very little concentrated in this brand; indeed, leisure and recreation activities seem to be the least located in this brand if compared to other brands. However, 3.4 “Wellness” activity is especially located in Pyrenees (3.554). Then comes category 7. “Tangible heritage”, also with a lower concentration than average in this brand (0.718). In spite of that, a high concentration of subcategory 7.7 “history/industrial” (6.206) can be found in this brand. 2. “Intangible heritage” (0.747), the 8. “Urban environment” (0.879) and 1. “Food and wine” are also slightly lower than average.

- **Coefficient of specialization:** Although in general the coefficient of specialization is closer to 0 than to 1 and therefore low, we can observe that Pyrenees is the second most specialized brand of all (0.279), as seen in table 3.59 (8 main categories). This means that this brand is specialized in some specific categories, in this case, especially nature and active tourism. Moreover, in the case of Table 3.61 (with the 31 subcategories) Pyrenees brand becomes the most specialized one (0.490), in this case this brand is specialized in certain subfactors.

- **Coefficient of diversification:** The coefficient of diversification of this brand (0.497) is closer to 0 than to 1, if we consider the eight main categories, meaning it is slightly more diverse than average, however this coefficient seems to be more or less in the middle. This means that Pyrenees is neither highly diversified nor very little diversified. However, if we look at table 3.61 with the 31 categories, we can clearly see that the coefficient of diversification is higher (0.677) meaning a lower diversification of the brand. When subcategories are taken into account, Pyrenees brand image spoken by bloggers is much more concentrated in specific types of attraction factors, the word counts are not equally distributed among the subcategories.

- **Sectoral Localization Coefficient**

If we consider the different categories of attraction factors, we can see that the category which has the highest localization coefficient, and is therefore localized in more specific brands (not in all equally) is 4. “Nature and active tourism” (0.132), which is especially localized in Pyrenees and Catalunya Central brands. Within it, 4.1 “Nature sports and active tourism” (0.196) is especially concentrated in these brands. Then, category 6. “sun, sea and sand” has the second highest localization coefficient by modality (0.123). This attraction factor is especially located in three coastal brands (Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava and Costa Daurada).

Table 3.58

Location indicators of general attraction factors per brands

TOURISM ATTRACTION FACTORS (i)	TOURISM BRAND (j)						SUM
	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	
1. Food and Wine	27,823	282	1,190	1,275	979	68	31,617
2. Intangible Heritage	4,441	39	255	164	298	9	5,206
3. Leisure & recreation	25,760	252	704	1,747	3,215	38	31,716
4. Nature & active tourism	9,728	1,052	238	1,235	619	256	13,128
5. Sports	11,837	90	178	204	159	13	12,481
6. Sun, Sea & Sand	20,651	146	1,699	3,004	1,658	21	27,179
7. Tangible Heritage	143,115	2,578	1,566	10,104	3,784	268	161,415
8. Urban Environment	61,920	751	787	2,499	1,261	137	67,355
SUM	305,275	5,190	6,617	20,232	11,973	810	350,097

Database: 23,387 blog entries in English classified by travellers' destination

Table 3.59

Spatial indexes of general attraction factors per brands

Localization indicators calculated from the data in Table 3.54

	TOURISM BRAND (j)						
	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	
TOURISM ATTRACTION FACTORS (i)	Location quotient by brand						Sectoral Localization coefficient
1. Food and Wine	1.009	0.602	1.991	0.698	0.905	0.930	0.027
2. Intangible Heritage	0.978	0.505	2.592	0.545	1.674	0.747	0.053
3. Leisure & recreation	0.931	0.536	1.174	0.953	2.964	0.518	0.070
4. Nature & active tourism	0.850	5.406	0.959	1.628	1.379	8.428	0.132
5. Sports	1.088	0.486	0.755	0.283	0.373	0.450	0.076
6. Sun, Sea & Sand	0.871	0.362	3.307	1.913	1.784	0.334	0.123
7. Tangible Heritage	1.017	1.077	0.513	1.083	0.685	0.718	0.021
8. Urban Environment	1.054	0.752	0.618	0.642	0.547	0.879	0.047
Coefficient of Specialization	0.022	0.201	0.308	0.133	0.263	0.279	
Coefficient of Diversification	0.559	0.603	0.318	0.586	0.412	0.497	

Database: 23,387 blog entries in English classified by travellers' destination

Then comes attraction factor 3. "Leisure and recreation", which is concentrated basically on the Costa Daurada Brand. Especially 3.3 "theme parks" is located in a very specific brand, Costa Daurada. After that comes 2. "intangible heritage" (0.053), which is less concentrated than the others, but if we could find a relevant concentration it would be in the Costa Barcelona brand. Category 8. "Urban environment" (0.047), although present in all brands, is more concentrated in the Barcelona brand. Within it, 8.2 "Barcelona attractions" is especially located in the Barcelona brand and 8.3 "other city attractions" in Costa Brava, Costa Daurada and Pyrenees.

Then comes 1. "Food and wine category", which is very little localized in specific brands (0.027). This means in all brands this attraction factor is mentioned similarly to average. However, within it, 1.2 "Wine" is very strongly localized in a single brand (Costa Barcelona).

Finally comes attraction factor 7. “Tangible heritage”, the most equally spread among all brands. It is the least concentrated in a single brand. In spite of that, within this category, subcategory 7.3 “Artists”, for example, is very strongly localized in a single brand (in this case Costa Brava).

Table 3.60

Location indicators of specific attraction factors per brands

TOURISM ATTRACTION FACTORS (i)	TOURISM BRAND (j)						SUM
	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	
1.1 Food and Drinks	24,691	220	645	1,085	794	63	27,498
1.2 Wine	3,132	62	545	190	185	5	4,119
2. Intangible Heritage	4,441	39	255	164	298	9	5,206
3.1 Nightlife and partying	12,893	60	458	645	1,318	5	15,379
3.2 Theatre, spectacles, cinema & music	6,398	168	143	831	344	5	7,889
3.3 Theme parks	2,699	7	4	16	1,435	0	4,161
3.4 Wellness	2,962	11	83	220	101	28	3,405
3.5 Leisure remaining words	808	6	16	35	17	0	882
4.1 Nature elements and places	6,181	691	151	806	384	165	8,378
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	1,615	234	38	184	86	59	2,216
4.3 Rural landscape	292	9	14	74	38	5	432
4.4 Nature remaining words	1,640	118	35	171	111	27	2,102
5.1 FC Barcelona	3,536	14	101	17	8	0	3,676
5.2 Sporting events/watching	7,497	55	59	89	69	2	7,771
5.3 Other sports	804	21	18	98	82	11	1,034
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	20,651	146	1,699	3,004	1,658	21	27,179
7.1 Buildings and architecture	24,161	277	341	1,070	524	60	26,433
7.2 Gaudí	51,496	79	179	76	107	0	51,937
7.3 Artists	6,207	40	61	2,093	22	2	8,425
7.4 Art, design, art styles	13,278	142	237	1,132	736	28	15,553
7.5 Museums	9,199	89	150	1,848	189	2	11,477
7.6 Archaeological sites	1,398	16	26	597	764	5	2,806
7.7 History/industrial	3,266	113	81	531	265	62	4,318
7.8 Military/castles	7,190	67	92	722	237	17	8,325
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	6,934	160	69	208	162	1	7,534
7.10 Religious heritage	17,869	1,578	295	1,752	693	85	22,272
7.11 Culture remaining words	2,117	17	35	75	85	6	2,335
8.1 Shopping	8,988	150	230	525	340	14	10,247
8.2 Barcelona attractions	28,482	130	113	119	59	1	28,904
8.3 Other city attractions	81	20	1	335	148	10	595
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	24,369	451	443	1,520	714	112	27,609
SUM	305,275	5,190	6,617	20,232	11,973	810	350,097

Database: 23,387 blog entries in English classified by travellers' destination

Table 3.61
 Spatial indexes of specific attraction factors per brands

<i>Localization indicators calculated from the data in Table 3.56</i>							
	TOURISM BRAND (j)						Sectoral Localization coefficient
	Barna	CatCe	cBarc	cBrav	cDaur	Pyren	
TOURISM ATTRACTION FACTORS (i)	Location quotient by brand						
1.1 Food and Drinks	1.030	0.540	1.241	0.683	0.844	0.990	0.031
1.2 Wine	0.872	1.015	7.001	0.798	1.313	0.525	0.124
2. Intangible Heritage	0.978	0.505	2.592	0.545	1.674	0.747	0.053
3.1 Nightlife and partying	0.961	0.263	1.576	0.726	2.506	0.141	0.062
3.2 Theatre, spectacles, cinema & music	0.930	1.437	0.959	1.823	1.275	0.274	0.063
3.3 Theme parks	0.744	0.113	0.051	0.067	10.084	0.000	0.311
3.4 Wellness	0.998	0.218	1.290	1.118	0.867	3.554	0.018
3.5 Leisure remaining words	1.051	0.459	0.960	0.687	0.564	0.000	0.044
4.1 Nature elements and places	0.846	5.564	0.954	1.665	1.340	8.512	0.145
4.2 Nature sports & active tourism	0.836	7.123	0.907	1.437	1.135	11.508	0.196
4.3 Rural landscape	0.775	1.405	1.715	2.964	2.572	5.003	0.135
4.4 Nature remaining words	0.895	3.787	0.881	1.408	1.544	5.552	0.094
5.1 FC Barcelona	1.103	0.257	1.454	0.080	0.064	0.000	0.099
5.2 Sporting events/watching	1.106	0.477	0.402	0.198	0.260	0.111	0.093
5.3 Other sports	0.892	1.370	0.921	1.640	2.319	4.598	0.096
6. Sun, Sea and Sand	0.871	0.362	3.307	1.913	1.784	0.334	0.123
7.1 Buildings and architecture	1.048	0.707	0.683	0.700	0.580	0.981	0.042
7.2 Gaudí	1.137	0.103	0.182	0.025	0.060	0.000	0.120
7.3 Artists	0.845	0.320	0.383	4.299	0.076	0.103	0.191
7.4 Art, design, art styles	0.979	0.616	0.806	1.259	1.384	0.778	0.028
7.5 Museums	0.919	0.523	0.691	2.786	0.482	0.075	0.103
7.6 Archaeological sites	0.571	0.385	0.490	3.682	7.961	0.770	0.393
7.7 History/industrial	0.867	1.765	0.992	2.128	1.795	6.206	0.116
7.8 Military/castles	0.990	0.543	0.585	1.501	0.832	0.883	0.029
7.9 Monuments and sculptures	1.055	1.433	0.485	0.478	0.629	0.057	0.055
7.10 Religious heritage	0.920	4.779	0.701	1.361	0.910	1.650	0.078
7.11 Culture remaining words	1.040	0.491	0.793	0.556	1.064	1.111	0.037
8.1 Shopping	1.006	0.987	1.188	0.887	0.970	0.591	0.009
8.2 Barcelona attractions	1.130	0.303	0.207	0.071	0.060	0.015	0.113
8.3 Other city attractions	0.156	2.267	0.089	9.743	7.273	7.264	0.753
8.4 Urban tourism and general sites	1.012	1.102	0.849	0.953	0.756	1.753	0.014
Coefficient of Specialization	0.043	0.446	0.332	0.351	0.367	0.490	
Coefficient of Diversification	0.562	0.755	0.689	0.550	0.553	0.677	

Database: 23,387 blog entries in English classified by travellers' destination

4. DISCUSSION

The discussion chapter is divided into three main sections: first, destination image in relation to its constituent elements, second, the progression of user-generated image versus official image, and third the need for a new paradigm when perceived image becomes transmitted.

4.1. Destination image in relation to its constituent elements

In general, we have observed that tourists' image in relation to its constituent elements (attraction factors, feelings and attributes and geographic and identity references) is much more concentrated in certain prominent image elements and destinations (or spaces) and not in a global vision or a vision which encompasses in a balanced way the different elements and territories, as official tourism websites do. This extreme specialization or superficial image of most tourists leads to fragmented or partial images and to images that can be quickly changed by other images. This may support what Harvey (1989 as cited in Govers et al., 2007a) notes, that with the Internet, images are becoming more and more fragmented and ephemeral in nature. Moreover, if we take into account that the majority of tourists writing blogs and reviews mainly come from very distant countries from the studied destination, this confirms Richards's (2002) idea that tourists from the most distant places having less time to visit are the ones that have a more focused vision of the very specific elements and must-sees of the destination.

4.1.1. Attraction factors, and feelings and dichotomies

Regarding attraction factors, the image of Catalonia in travel blogs and reviews is considerably dissonant to that of Official Tourism Websites (OTWs), as shown in Table 4.1. The two main elements of Catalonia according to bloggers and reviewers are: Barcelona + Gaudí (which can be considered the "must-sees" or symbols of the destination). Almost everybody writing blogs and reviews visited Barcelona and Gaudí's masterpieces at some point of their trip and gave them a predominant place within their accounts, they purposefully placed these elements as the most important, and they are a central element of the tourists' gaze.

This represents one of the greatest differences with official tourism website image as the latter mention Gaudí much less. This low mention of Gaudí and his masterpieces by OTWs may be due to the fact that they do not need as much promotion as other monuments and heritage, or that OTWs act in a "politically correct" way promoting the different attraction factors of the different territories in a balanced way.

Although tangible heritage is the strongest attraction factor in both type of websites, its nature is dissonant. The heritage promoted in travel blogs and reviews is remarkably reduced to and concentrated on Gaudí and some specific elements, if compared to all the heritage sights and attractions existing in the territory of Catalonia. OTWs project more diverse tangible heritage in terms of elements and territories. This concentration of bloggers in the Gaudí subject can also be seen in the fact that Gaudí, the Sagrada Família and his other masterpieces have the highest ranks and are among the top words, with thousands of

mentions, while in OTWs the proportion of the subject of Gaudí is so small that they are not even among the most frequent 100 words.

Another important dissonance is that while OTWs give more stress to the attraction factors of nature and active tourism, sun, sea and sand, and culture in general, tourists mention more elements related to Barcelona such as the urban environment. Although Catalonia is a mass coastal tourist destination, the bloggers' and reviewers' online image of Catalonia is not one of sun, sea and sand, but of Barcelona + Gaudí.

Some consonances between both types of websites exist too: The Catalan artists (Dalí, Miró, Pau Casals, etc.) are similarly mentioned in both types of texts. Then, intangible heritage, so significant for the cultural identity and representative of the cultural identity expressions of the region, is the least promoted of all elements in both types of websites. This is surprising for OTWs, which aim to promote Catalan culture, identity and intangible heritage as part of the tourist experience.

On each type of website, different attraction factors seem to be correlated and therefore promoted or mentioned together. Some relevant consonances between both types of texts are that, first, the strongest relationship is that of tangible heritage with the urban environment. This relationship is easily understood as it is in the urban environment that the tangible heritage is located. Second, tangible heritage is strongly correlated to both nature and active tourism and sun, sea and sand. Both texts see these elements as complementary. It is especially remarkable that bloggers and reviewers relate these elements as, although the main element for them is always tangible heritage, this shows relative diversification in their interests, tourism modalities and attraction factors. For example, bloggers relate strongly nature and active tourism and religious heritage, probably related to specific destinations.

Official Tourism Websites relate attraction factors that are usually seen or experienced together: urban environment + leisure and recreation; nature and active tourism + sports in general; leisure and recreation + intangible heritage, etc. The relationship of sun, sea and sand + nature and active tourism shows that although these elements do not necessarily go together in tourism terms, OTWs often project them together.

For their part, bloggers and reviewers relate strongly food and wine to 3 elements: urban environment, sun, sea and sand, and leisure and recreation. Urban environment is also related to shopping and other city attractions. Finally, a relationship can be found between intangible heritage and cultural leisure (theatre/spectacles/cinema/music) and urban environment. The reduced group of bloggers who seem to be interested in intangible heritage are also interested in cultural leisure (probably more aware of traditions, festivals, local identity, town feasts, etc.).

Remarkably, however, in the case of travel blogs and reviews, correlations are much less strong and irregular. Qualitatively, we observed that in general all the attraction factors mentioned by OTWs were more internally diverse and territorially balanced while all the elements mentioned by bloggers in all attraction factor categories were very specific and concentrated in certain elements.

Table 4.1
 Summary of attraction factors (Catalonia)

	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES
Gaudí	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great importance of Gaudí and his masterpieces (Sagrada Família, 2nd most frequent word of all with 18,859 mentions. Four of Gaudí's masterpieces and his name found among the top 50 words). Symbol for the tourists. - Bloggers' image = binomial Barcelona + Gaudí → "Must-sees". 	Gaudí and his works did not appear among the first 100 words and hence were not given the same kind of importance as tourists gave them. For example "Sagrada Família" only appeared in 884 th position on official tourism websites among all words.
Tangible heritage	<p>The most mentioned group of attraction factors is tangible heritage.</p> <p>Bloggers concentrate on very specific elements, especially Gaudí and his buildings (and also specific heritage sites such as the Dalí museum, some artists and artstyles, etc.). Gaudí alone accounts for about 1/3 of the total tangible heritage elements mentioned.</p>	<p>The most mentioned group of attraction factors is tangible heritage.</p> <p>OTWs promote heritage of all types and of all places, in equilibrium for all the brand regions.</p>
Other attraction factors	<p>Other important attraction factors in order of frequency mentions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Urban environment 2. Food and wine 3. Leisure and recreation (all factors strongly related to Barcelona) <p>Much less promoted: 4. Sun, sea and sand; 5. Nature and active tourism.</p> <p>The least promoted: intangible heritage</p> <p>Specific attraction factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More mentioned: leisure such as theme parks (the most mentioned type of leisure) and nightlife and partying, FC Barcelona and sporting events, shopping and Barcelona urban attractions are much more present. - Less mentioned: they barely mention the rural landscape. 	<p>Other important attraction factors in order of frequency mentions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature and active tourism 2. Sun, sea and sand 3. Urban environment 4. Leisure and recreation, 5. sports <p>The least promoted: intangible heritage</p> <p>Specific attraction factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More mentioned: elements related to wine, wellness and cultural leisure (theatre/spectacles/cinema/music), various types of tangible heritage (such as archaeological sites), nature in general, golf and skiing, sun, sea and sand. - Less mentioned: FC Barcelona is hardly present in OTWs.

Source: Author

The analysis of destination image **per brands**, shows that although some similarities exist between the attraction factors mentioned by travel blogs and reviews and OTWs, differences or dissonances are more present. As Table 4.2 shows, OTWs very often just relate to the brands' general concepts of culture, nature, urban tourism, etc. while bloggers relate them to concepts clearly attached to very specific elements (Gaudí, Dalí Museum, Montserrat, Sitges, PortAventura, etc.). This could be seen in the analysis of the top twelve elements correlated to each of the brands on both official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. For some of the brands such as Barcelona, Costa Barcelona and Terres de Lleida, the images are very dissonant. In contrast, the image presented on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews for some brands is more coincident, probably meaning the brands' image is more consolidated or better disseminated. This is the case of Costa Brava and Costa Daurada.

Thanks to spatial indexes we can see the specialization of brands in relative terms and how diversified they are in their attraction factors in the eyes of bloggers and reviewers. The

attraction factor which has the highest location coefficient, and is therefore located in more specific brands (not in all equally), is “nature and active tourism”, which is especially located in Pyrenees and Catalunya Central brands. The category “sun, sea and sand” is especially located in three coastal brands (Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava and Costa Daurada). Next attraction factor “leisure and recreation” is concentrated basically in the Costa Daurada brand. Although both “intangible heritage” and “food and wine” are not very concentrated in a single brand, they are more concentrated in Costa Barcelona. The “urban environment” despite being present in all brands, is more concentrated in the Barcelona brand. Finally, the “tangible heritage” attraction factor is the most equally spread among all the brands. It is the only element present with a similar importance in all brands, a fundamental part in the brands’ image.

Bloggers’ images of Catalonia and of Barcelona have major resemblances because Barcelona accounts for more than 80% of the total entries about Catalonia. The coefficient of specialization of Barcelona is very close to zero, which means that the brand region has the same composition as the totality of the regions (Catalonia) or does not specialize in relative terms in any attraction factor. Barcelona’s coefficient of diversification is low if we consider the eight major attraction factors) but becomes the third more diverse brand considering the 31 detailed attraction factors. Regarding Costa Barcelona, the coefficient of diversification shows that Costa Barcelona is the most diverse brand of all if we just consider the eight major attraction factors. However, if we consider the 31 factors it becomes one of the least diverse (or more specialized in certain ones). Costa Brava is probably the least specialized in certain elements relative to the whole of Catalonia (both considering attraction factors 8 and 31), meaning that in the eyes of tourists it has very diverse attraction factors that are mentioned with a considerable spread of importance. Costa Daurada is the third most specialized brand in certain attraction factors and subfactors and the lowest in diversification considering the detailed factors (very concentrated on certain elements). Catalunya Central, on the other hand, has a high specialization coefficient (very highly specialized considering 31 factors) and the lowest diversification coefficient of all (very specific attraction factors are prominent). Finally, Pyrenees are also highly specialized (the most specialized of all considering 31 detailed attraction factors), not diversified and concentrated.

Table 4.2

Summary of attraction factors per brands

	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES	COMPARISON/COMMENTS
Barcelona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concentration and specialization in 1. Tangible heritage and 2. Gaudí: Gaudí and his works (highest specializations), buildings and architecture, religious heritage and art (most frequent words: Sagrada Família, Gaudí, Parc Güell, Church and museum). - Strong relation to 3. Urban environment (brand with the highest % of this attraction factor), specifically specialized in “Barcelona attractions” (Rambla/s, metro, Boqueria and the Gothic quarter). - Strong association to 4. Food and wine (tapas, paella, wine and beer are the most popular). - Highest specialization in sports (sporting events/watching and Football Club Barcelona: Camp Nou, Olympic, etc.) and relative non-specialization in sun, sea and sand and nature and active tourism. - Related to leisure: nightlife and cultural leisure. - Major intangible heritage element: flamenco. <p>Cluster analysis (best predicting variables): Tangible heritage + Urban environment + Leisure and recreational activities or Tangible heritage + Good feelings + Gaudí. Shopping is also an important variable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attraction factors most strongly correlated to Barcelona: Culture in general, urban environment, history, authenticity, leisure, Barcelona attractions (all general elements). - Cluster analysis shows that the best predicting variables are: Barcelona attractions, museums, monuments and culture. 	<p>The main concepts associated with Barcelona (which has a consolidated international tourist brand) have important differences for bloggers and for official tourism websites, especially in terms of the subject of Gaudí.</p> <p>This means that although official Barcelona websites are trying to promote certain elements, tourists may be coming to the destination for very specific elements or attractions that are not promoted by the OTWs very strongly.</p>
Costa Barcelona	<p>CBarc is the brand with the strongest relation and specialization in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sun, sea and sand (beaches) 2. Intangible heritage (festa major and Carnival), surely related to Sitges (most common words: parade, Carnival/carnival, fireworks, etc.). 3. Wine (7 times more specialized than average) due to the presence of the Penedès cava/wine region (in cluster analysis cava is the second best predictor). Most common words: wine, Codorniu, vineyard/s). Tapas, paella and fish are the most mentioned foods. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although tangible heritage is the second most mentioned 	<p>Strongly related with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Culture in general 2. Old (with history) 3. Leisure 4. Urban environment <p>and less strongly, with 5. sun, sea and sand.</p>	<p>Major dissonance: Surprisingly official sites do not seem to have among their 12 top items the elements that make this brand stand out for tourists, especially Wine and Carnival, and do not relate it so strongly to sun, the sea and the sand.</p> <p>Cluster results show that the only two categories coinciding in both types of files to predict the presence of the brand are “cava” and “sun, sea and sand”.</p>

	<p>attraction factor, spatial indexes show it is the brand with the lowest relative concentration of this element (most mentioned words: church, museum, Gaudí, art, buildings and architecture such as Cau Ferrat house in Sitges).</p> <p>- This brand is mainly related to and specialized in “nightlife and partying” leisure.</p> <p>Cluster analysis probably reveals the different types of tourism occurring in the area: sun, sea and sand + visits to Barcelona and Gaudí or + Carnival or + nightlife or+ wine</p>		
Costa Brava	<p>Common attraction factors in both types of files: sun, sea and sand, history/old and attractions (such as in Girona), nature elements and military/ castles.</p> <p>- Strongest associations: 1. tangible heritage: specialized in artists and the Dalí Museum (the two most common words are Dalí and museum) and to the heritage of the city of Girona (cathedral, church). Spatial indexes show a concentration on artists (Dalí) and archaeological sites (Empúries). 2. sun, sea and sand (beach/es). Although in absolute numbers “tangible heritage” was the most present (first), the spatial indexes (relative to the whole Catalonia), see this brand is first specialized in sun, sea and sand → This fits better with the established image of the brand, strongly related to coastal tourism.</p> <p>- Strongly related to the urban environment with regard to the city of Girona (words such as the “Onyar” river, the bridges over it and its “Jewish quarter” in first places).</p> <p>- Important association with leisure: cultural leisure (related mainly to theatre and film festivals), and nightlife and partying.</p> <p>- The most mentioned food is tapas.</p> <p>- It is remarkably a coastal brand with an important nature component and specialization.</p>	<p>Common attraction factors in both types of files: sun, sea and sand, history/old, other city attractions (such as in Girona), nature elements and military/ castles.</p> <p>OTWs strongly relate this brand with sun, sea and sand.</p>	<p>Remarkably coincident image: Many common attraction factors for both types of files exist. Cluster analysis shows that “other city attractions” is the only predicting variable they have in common → key to the brands’ image.</p> <p>OTWs do not seem to promote very strongly some elements that for bloggers are fundamental about the brand. Specific factors strongly mentioned by bloggers are “artists” and the “museum” element (referring to the Dalí Museum) and “archaeological sites” (Empúries), which are not mentioned among the top attraction factors by OTWs → We observe in tourists' accounts the essence of the brand which means the “wild coast”, combining nature and the sea.</p> <p>Low contrasts between attraction factor concentrations indicate it is diverse in terms of tourism or has a little of everything in the eyes of tourists.</p>

Costa Daurada	<p>Very strongly associated and specialized in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leisure and recreation (3 times more than average), specifically to Theme parks (10 times more than average): PortAventura. This park is a fundamental component of the brand's image. 2. Archaeological sites (more located here than anywhere else) because of the world heritage site of Tarragona (Roman remains and Medieval cathedral). Most mentioned words: "Roman, cathedral, ruins and walls". Related to history. Cluster analysis shows that "archaeological sites" and "theme parks" are two of the best predicting factors for the presence of the brand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is relatively specialized in sun, sea and sand (beaches) and nightlife and partying (probably related to Salou). - Urban environment elements mentioned are related to the capital of the Region Tarragona (Rambla nova, etc.). - Wine is the first drink mentioned (it is a region of wineries) and fish the first food (probably related to Cambrils's fish cuisine). - The nature elements of the brand are little mentioned. However, spatial indexes show a relative specialization in rural landscape. - The most mentioned intangible heritage element: Castellars (human towers), originally from this region. 	<p>Multiple common elements are found in OTWs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other city attractions, - Sun, sea and sand, - Theme parks referring especially to Port Aventura), - Archaeological sites (referring mainly to Tarragona), - Leisure and intangible heritage, - As well as its history and old age. 	<p>Very coincident or consonant image. The case of Costa Daurada probably has the most coincident and coherent image held by official tourism websites and by bloggers and reviewers of all brands.</p> <p>Costa Daurada is the brand with most contrasts in the location of elements within it; as shown by spatial indexes in the case of bloggers, it has a very high specialization in certain elements (especially theme parks and archaeological sites).</p>
Catalunya Central	<p>- Strongly related and specialized in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tangible heritage, specifically in religious heritage ("monastery, basilica, church, black Madonna, statue" are the most common words). Religious heritage is most strongly concentrated in this brand. 2. Nature and active tourism: nature elements and places (mountain, rock formations), nature sports and active tourism (hiking or climbing) (7 times more concentrated than average). <p>Both factors seem to be directly related to Montserrat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accordingly, cluster analysis shows the best predicting variables for the brand are "old/old-fashioned" and "nature 	<p>Strongly correlated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religious heritage, probably referring to Montserrat. <p>OTWs emphasize the heritage-related view (history, authenticity, monuments, urban tourism).</p>	<p>Partly coincident image. The tangible heritage aspect is coincident but OTWs do not stress the nature related aspect so much.</p> <p>This brand has important contrasts in terms of attraction factor location quotients (some elements are highly located and others are hardly located here).</p> <p>For bloggers, the image of the brand is concentrated in Montserrat.</p>

	<p>and active tourism”, referring to both tangible heritage and nature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remarkably too within the leisure and recreation attraction factor, the cultural leisure activities of theatre/spectacles/cinema/music are the most prominent with the word “choir” referring to the Escolania de Montserrat the most mentioned. - It is non-specialized in sun, sea and sand. 		
Pyrenees	<p>Very strongly associated (equally) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature and active tourism: It is the brand most strongly specialized in this (highest concentration of all, eight times more than average). Specifically, it is related to nature elements and places (8.5 times more than average; most frequent words: “national park, Aigüestortes), nature sports (11.5 times more than average; most frequent word: rafting) and rural landscape (5 times more than average). 2. Tangible heritage: Religious heritage (probably referring to world heritage Romanesque churches) and history (the most frequent word is “Medieval”). <p>Also related to: Food and wine and urban environment (specifically to bridges, streets, and the Jewish quarter, probably referring to the tourist village of Besalú).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although “other sports” are scarcely present, it is relatively specialized in them (skiing and wellness). 	<p>Strong relationship with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature elements and active tourism, as well as its rural landscape, 2. Religious heritage (probably referring to the Romanesque churches) and history. 	<p>Pyrenees has a considerably coincident image.</p> <p>It is surprising that sports in general, which include skiing, are not considerably mentioned, probably indicating that within the bloggers’ image skiing is not a priority.</p> <p>Pyrenees is the brand in which the extreme high and low concentrations of certain elements are more visible, it has the biggest contrasts.</p>
Terres de Lleida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most mentioned attraction factor: Tangible heritage. It is the brand most strongly identified with tangible, particularly religious heritage (churches, the Seu Vella in Lleida, the cathedral and cloisters). - Second brand most related to food and wine (one frequent word is fruit, agricultural product of the area). - Strongly related to nature and active tourism, as this region is especially bound and close to Pyrenees. Cluster analysis shows nature and rural-related elements are among the best predictors for the brand - The most prominent intangible heritage elements are the castellers. 	<p>The most mentioned attraction factors are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rural landscape 2. Tangible heritage and culture. 	<p>Major dissonance: It is the least coincident brand in the 12 major attraction factors. Rural landscape is the only common element among the most strongly correlated, also in the cluster analysis. This indicates that probably the intended image of the brand is still not well consolidated in the eyes of bloggers.</p>

Terres de l'Ebre	<p>Strongest mentioned factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tangible heritage: Military/castles, churches and buildings2. Nature and active tourism, in particular because of the Ebre Delta area and nature Park and rural landscape. Cluster analysis shows the nature theme is the main predictor of the brand.3. Leisure, some urban elements and the sun, sea and sand are also importantly mentioned.	<p>Strongly related to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The sun the sea and the sand2. Intangible heritage <p>Cluster analysis shows the nature theme is the main predictor of the brand.</p>	<p>Partly coincident image: Both types of websites relate it with nature and active tourism (Delta de l'Ebre), with its history. Surprisingly, this time the image promoted by bloggers is far more varied than that promoted by OTWs.</p>
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Source: Author

With regard to **Feelings and dichotomies** about **Catalonia**, tourists in their travel blog and review writing use feelings and opinions much more in general than OTWs to describe the destination and the experiences (both positive and negative). As seen in table 4.3, the nature of the feelings and attributes used are of high interest. In general, the most prominent feelings and attributes used to describe Catalonia by both types of websites are highly coincident. In general we observed that both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews use mostly positive feelings and attributes to describe Catalonia and the Catalan destinations. We observed that strong correlations exist between positive attributes and feelings in both OTWs and travel blogs and reviews. In spite of this, bad feelings and negative attributes (such as boring, noisy, full, chaotic, dirty, distress, unsafe, etc.) are much more used in proportion by bloggers than official tourism websites. The fact that the strongest correlation of bloggers is between good and bad feelings shows again that bloggers describe both the good and the bad things of a destination without worries. Feelings and adjectives used by bloggers are more polarized into good and bad feelings than in OTWs, which tend to use almost exclusively good feelings and are more neutral in general.

In the analysis of feelings and attributes per brands, as a general tendency, bloggers describe the brands with about five or six times more good feelings and attributes than bad feelings (see table 4.4). The brand described as more positive is Pyrenees (13 times more good feelings than bad feelings), and the brand with the smallest proportion of good feelings is Terres de Lleida (4 times more good feelings than bad feelings). Apart from that, the Costa Daurada brand is the one with a highest density of good feelings of all. The general use of positive adjectives by bloggers could indicate their satisfaction with the tourist experience in Catalonia.

Regarding positive attributes, the most used by bloggers for all brands are: “beautiful”, “love”, “pleasant”, “fun/interesting”. All of the brands, except for Catalunya Central, are also described strongly by bloggers as being “friendly”. All of the brands except for Pyrenees and Catalunya Central are seen as “lively”. Some of the brands are more strongly associated with being “quiet” (Costa Brava, Pyrenees, and Terres de Lleida, especially the last two with peaceful nature and rural landscapes). Most of the brands are associated with being orderly, clean and relaxing (Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Daurada, Pyrenees, Terres de l’Ebre and Terres de Lleida).

Concerning negative attributes, the ones mentioned for the most touristy brands seem to be related to the touristification of the brands’ destinations and tourist sights. For example, Barcelona is associated with negative attributes such as noisy, full and dirty. Costa Daurada and Costa Barcelona are also perceived as “noisy” and “full” (which may indicate their touristy nature in the eyes of tourists. For all brands, one negative adjective more used than its positive counterpart is “full” (probably related to tourist spaces where many people may be encountered). Some of the brands are also associated with being modest or poor (Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Daurada, Terres de Lleida and Pyrenees), probably referring to the fact that products and infrastructures are simple or modest, not luxurious. Some of the brands are seen as more expensive than cheap (Costa Daurada, Terres de l’Ebre, and Terres de Lleida) although these results may not be conclusive for the two last brands. Notably, bloggers and reviewers mention more often the issue of unsafety in the most touristy coastal

brands (Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada) and less often in the less touristy rural brands (Terres de l'Ebre and Terres de Lleida). Especially for Barcelona unsafety is importantly present in the eyes of bloggers and reviewers (major density). This shows tourists' concerns about safety, as many mention pickpocketing experiences and warn others.

The concept of authenticity vs. inauthenticity was very interesting. The concept of authentic is much denser in travel blogs and reviews than OTWs. Authenticity is one of the main attributes used by bloggers. We observed that the attribute of authentic is in both types of websites one of the top 10 most used. However, inauthentic is almost inexistent in both cases. However, words related to inauthentic, are much more present in travel blogs and reviews, showing that some bloggers may have concerns or disappointments in this respect, which should be further explored, while OTWs only describe the destinations as authentic. For example, the Costa Barcelona brand is described as the least authentic, probably due to its touristy nature, and Terres de l'Ebre as the most authentic, probably due to its low tourist development and unspoilt nature and culture.

Perceived authenticity by tourists is relevant as it influences perceived image and satisfaction. Waller and Lea (1998) assert that "considering each scenario separately, there is a positive correlation between perceived authenticity and predicted enjoyment". The interpretation of authenticity in turn depends on multiple other factors and when tourists judge authenticity they incur value judgements. If image does not correspond to reality this may lead to interpreting the place as inauthentic.

Furthermore, a constant feature observed in the feelings and dichotomies analysis was that feelings were in general exaggerated, especially by tourists. Many authors contend that tourists may exaggerate or distort perception when explaining their travel experiences through word-of-mouth. In this context, an important challenge concerns the fact that official tourism websites always show positive information whilst user-generated image sometimes shows negative images of the destination. While tourist information from OTWs is centred on positive aspects of the destination and tends to shade the negative or potential negative aspects (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009), "in a travel sense, consumers often spread WOM due to extreme feelings associated with a product 'experience', such as pleasure or sadness" (Burgess et al., 2009). In this sense, destinations which are not aware of what is being said about them online may be subject to exaggerated, distorted or negative undesired images without even trying to counteract them. "In fact, as with traditional WOM, it is more likely that consumers who have had extreme (very favourable or very unfavourable) experiences are more likely to provide online comments or reviews" (Burgess et al., 2009). Hence those negative images should easily spread through e-wom. Tourists may be exaggerating their bad experiences.

Tourists base their decisions on expectations, and expectations are held on information. It is therefore comprehensible that tourist information, especially on official tourism websites, concentrates on the positive aspects of the destination and tends to avoid the negative aspects (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009). Huertas and Fernández-Cavia (2009) point out that tourists are very susceptible to risks, or perceived potential risks.

Huertas and Fernández-Cavia (2009) contend the best thing to do with potential risks is to be well informed about them or to provide good information. "According to International Standardisation Organisation, risk communication "must keep relation with the existence, nature, form, probability, severity, acceptability, treatment or other risk aspects". (ISO, 2002)". "In fact, risk communication is a right that all individuals, citizens or tourists, must have access because it affects personal security". "Although the logics and risk communication studies state that it is fundamental and essential for individual welfare and security, the truth is that risk communication is intended to be minimised or even to be deleted" (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009). Probably a good option for OTWs would be to inform tourists well about potential risks, even if minor, which is better than explaining only the positive aspects and then disappointing tourists.

As tourism communication intends to disseminate and promote the most attractive positive aspects of a destination, appealing to visitors' feelings, "tourism communication will always be positive, even it can be exaggerated or fictitious" (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009). Talking about risk, it is generally "avoided by risk companies, institutions or the sectors that can be affected, such as tourism", is especially avoided by official organizations and their websites, in order "to avoid spreading the reality of the area" and provoke fears (Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009).

By contrast, in the case of bloggers, the intense use of positive and negative adjectives indicates that the feedback into tourist image that bloggers are providing is full of openly expressed value judgements. Tourists complain if they are not satisfied and become destination promoters if they are satisfied. However, the discourse of official tourism websites is more neutral and devoid of negative attributes and self-criticism. In this sense, as the discourse of tourist bloggers is much more similar to the real experience, opinions and feelings (of tourists, which may not always be positive), it has the potential to influence far more the perception of tourists. This may represent a risk for the destination as negative images can spread quickly through e-WOM, hence, DMOs should monitor it to be able to address negative aspects. A clear example of this is that we have observed that attributes related to unsafe are much denser in tourists' accounts than on official tourism websites, which shows the "unsafe" perception of Catalonia by many tourists who often mention pickpocketing activities. This image could be very harmful and should be dealt with.

Therefore, although official tourism websites only talk about the positive aspects of the destination, travel blogs and reviews emphasize the risks such as pickpocketing and as explained, many Catalan tourist brands were described as rather unsafe. This word-of-mouth then becomes much more credible. However, this may not happen in specific cases "when negative word-of-mouth is provided with the specific goal to vent frustration or anger, its influence on the receiver tends to be reduced, as the information is not perceived to be constructive or useful" (Wetzer, Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007 as cited in Burgess et al., 2009).

Word-of-mouth can be very credible and have a major impact on negative things, especially for brands or destinations that are unknown or unfamiliar to tourists (East, Hammond & Lomax, 2008). Popular knowledge says that negative comments spread

more quickly and influence more than positive ones. Even if the official sites say it is safe, if other tourists say they have been pickpocketed the user will vehemently believe the tourist recounting their bad experience. This, however, is the case of many destinations which create an unsafe online reputation.

Table 4.3
Feelings and dichotomies (Catalonia)

	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES
Use of feelings and dichotomies	Among the 50 most frequent words, we can see that in travel blogs and reviews five positive feelings and attributes appear: “great”, “good”, “beautiful”, “amazing” and “fun”.	In OTWs the only positive adjective that was present among the top 50 words was: “great”.
Main feelings and dichotomies	<p>Both types of websites associate Catalonia with being: Beautiful, fun/interesting, at the same time as old (ancient) and new or fashionable, authentic, associated with love and relax. Positive attributes.</p> <p>Travel blogs and reviews also relate Catalonia and its attractions to being: full, cheap and noisy (with a negative connotation). The fact that these 3 concepts are strongly correlated to one another indicates that bloggers who use them may use them all at the same time thus indicating a negative commentary. These attributes are functional or related to day-to-day travel situations where tourists may encounter full attractions and noisy places. Interestingly, bloggers and reviewers are concerned about cheap prices and also about the “modest/poor” aspect of the destination.</p>	<p>Both types of websites associate Catalonia with being: Beautiful, fun/interesting, at the same time as old (ancient) and new or fashionable, authentic, associated with love and relax.</p> <p>Official tourism websites differ from travel blogs and reviews in that they describe Catalonia as being quiet, lively and pleasant.</p> <p>If official sites mention some kind of money value they make more mention of the “luxurious/wealthy” aspect of the destination.</p>

Source: Author

Table 4.4
Feelings and dichotomies per brands

BRANDS	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS
Barcelona	<p>The two strongest correlations are between Barcelona and: “Good feelings” and “Bad feelings”.</p> <p>The 2 categories with the highest densities are good feelings and bad feelings, followed by “beautiful” and “fun/interesting”.</p> <p>- It is also related to touristification-related attributes such as noisy, full, dirty and unsafe (pickpocketing).</p>
Costa Barcelona	<p>- It is seen as especially pleasant and only friendly.</p> <p>- It is considered the cleanest of all.</p> <p>- Related to touristification items such as: noisy, full or unsafe.</p> <p>- Although it is mostly described as authentic it has the major presence of the attribute “inauthentic” of all brands.</p>
Costa Brava	<p>- Mainly related to positive feelings such as love but also strongly related to some unpleasant feelings (related to touristification).</p> <p>- Especially quiet in the eyes of tourists, also related to relaxing. It is seen as a territory that is old/old-fashioned with history.</p> <p>- Remarkably it is considered especially cheap and modest/poor. This may indicate that visitors going to the Costa Brava are more sensitive to prices.</p>
Costa Daurada	<p>- Costa Daurada brand is especially described with seemingly opposing concepts. It has the highest density of the “love” concept and the density of “friendly” appears three times more than average. It has the highest density of being “fun/interesting” (although it also has the highest density of “boring”, but twelve times less frequently).</p> <p>- It is seen at the same time as full, noisy and lively and orderly, clean and related to relaxing → This shows the diversity of views of this territory depending on the tourist.</p>
Catalunya Central	<p>Bloggers do not use attributes as much as with other brands to describe Catalunya Central (densities of positive attributes are among the lowest of all). This may be due to the fact that as it is very often a one-day excursion brand, bloggers do not get to know it thoroughly and therefore do not describe it so extensively and with so many positive attributes. The brand is mainly seen as old/old-fashioned and negatively as gloomy.</p>
Pyrenees	<p>- It is outstandingly described as beautiful. It is described with very few adjectives that may have negative connotations. It is seen as the most “beautiful” and “pleasant” and “fun/interesting” of all brands.</p> <p>- It is seen as the most “quiet” of all brands and also as orderly and relaxing, probably due to its mountainous landscape and nature.</p> <p>- It is only seen as authentic and is seen as one of the safest brands.</p> <p>- Adjectives related to cheap/expensive are not used much in this brand. Probably the tourism done here does not imply many economic transactions.</p>
Terres de Lleida	<p>- It is only seen as positive, as related to “love”, “beautiful”, “pleasant” and “friendly” and “authentic”.</p> <p>- It is eminently quiet and empty in the eyes of tourists. It is considered to be rather expensive.</p> <p>- It is considered to be only safe, no mentions of unsafety are made.</p>
Terres de l'Ebre	<p>- Strongly associated to good feelings and love. TEbre has an eminently positive image.</p> <p>- It is seen as the most authentic, old/old-fashioned and safest brand of all. However, it is related to being expensive.</p>

Source: Author

More generally regarding **attraction factors and feelings and dichotomies**, we identify both the discourse of tourism in the promotion of official tourism websites and in the accounts of tourists within travel blogs and reviews. In tourists' accounts we can clearly identify the discourse of tourism mentioned by Urbain (1989) and Dann (1996). We observed themes related to eating, drinking, having fun, love, hiking, and also the simple movement, natural activities, the conviviality, the pleasure and comfort mentioned by Urbain, (1989). We clearly saw the language of recreation within their accounts, which playfully re-creates reality (Dann, 1996).

The elements we identified belonging to the discourse of tourism mentioned by Dann (1996) were: the 3Rs (Romanticism, regression, and rebirth), 3Hs (Happiness, hedonism, and heliocentrism), 3Fs (Fun, fantasy, fairy tales) and 3Ss (Sea, sex, and socialization). We identified "romanticism" in that both for travel blogs and reviews and official tourism websites the concept "love" is one of the most prominent among attributes. It is especially prominent in the case of bloggers who use it very often and is correlated to other positive attributes. We also identified heliocentrism as the sun, sea and sand category, which is one of the most prominent on official tourism websites (the third most prominent). In the case of travel blogs and reviews, this category is not so prominent (the fifth most prominent) but it has a considerable density too. We also clearly saw the "sea" element as Catalonia is an eminently coastal destination, and the "sex" element in the "nightlife and partying" category. We also identified that "fun" is one of the most used concepts to describe Catalonia and its tourist attractions, especially by bloggers and reviewers, but it may be a *leitmotiv* in all tourist destinations. In Catalonia, this may be especially prominent due to its specialization in theme parks, leisure activities and sun and sea tourism.

Tourists reflect the discourse of leisure and travelling and do so by explaining the different activities and experiences of tourism and leisure. They reflect what Ateljevic and Doorne (2002) say are the structural forces in society, the leisure society compelling people to travel and to visit foreign places in order to be socially accepted, prestigious, etc. Moreover, we observed that through the language of tourism, tourists do what Dann (1996) explains as the feedback into discourse by constructing images and systems of expectations and the evaluation of the matching of expectations and reality. In this sense, tourists who have a negative perception of the destination express this in travel blogs and reviews by complaining, and we also observed that if they are happy and satisfied they themselves become promoters.

According to Dann (1996), the rhetoric of promoters (in this case official sites) should be similar to that of the discourse of tourists (in this case bloggers), however in this study case, they have some important differences, as we have observed, in terms of attraction factors and identity references. The nature of the words employed by travel bloggers and reviewers and by official tourism websites is different. In general, official tourism websites are in nature informative and descriptive, while travel blogs and reviews reflect travel histories full of experiences (reflecting more circumstantial or functional day-to-day elements), far more feelings and opinions, etc. This difference in the nature of language use may explain some of the differences between both types of file images.

Such divergence in the type of images presented can be related to Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) classification of the elements within perceived tourist image in a continuum of destination image dimensions: attribute-holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique. For example, perceived image, embodied in tourists' accounts, is based much more on day-to-day functional elements: food and drink, sleep, accommodation, transportation, etc. This is already seen in the most frequent words, where official tourism websites use more psychological informational words and descriptive words such as century, centre, office, information, etc. and bloggers use among their most frequent words, functional day-to-day words, for example, related to transport such as bus, train, walk or metro. Moreover, perceived-transmitted image by tourists is more centred on observable things such as prices, specific sites, events and experiences, while official tourism websites (projected image), although also conveying functional elements, seem to give more emphasis than bloggers to the psychological elements such as autochthonous identity, lifestyle, landscapes, culture and nature in general, etc.

Regarding authenticity, which could be seen within the psychological concepts, it is one of the main elements present in the discourse of tourism according to Dann (1996). We observed that it is tourists in travel blogs who mention it more often than official sites. Therefore, it seems that the quest for authenticity mentioned by MacCannell (1976) is importantly present in tourists' accounts both in a positive and a negative sense.

Concerning attribute vs. holistic aspects, the concepts and words used by travel blogs and reviews are more attribute-based than holistic, they are more specific, while projected image always shows a more holistic image of the destinations most centred on general descriptions of it and its attraction factors. This can be seen within the fifty most frequent words: bloggers use plenty of good feelings and attributes related to specific experiences and sites, while the attributes used by official tourism websites refer to holistic elements of the destination related to attraction factors such as "cultural" or "natural" and to some general good feelings like "great". Indeed, official websites talk about the possible places tourists can visit and about the pull factors and attractions of various destinations prior to the actual sightseeing (Dann, 1996) in a more general, holistic way.

In respect of the issue of common and unique aspects, in our case we observed that bloggers tend to mention more unique attraction factors only found in the destination such as "Barcelona", "Gaudí" and the "Rambles", while travel blogs and reviews tend to promote different multiple attraction factors of different types (culture, nature, urban factors in general, etc.).

It should be noted that our results partly coincide with what Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) identified: that official tourism websites best transmit the functional brand image and the strong points or the potential they wish to promote but not the emotional and the personality values. Although official tourism websites also transmit functional information, according to our results this type of information is more frequent in bloggers' accounts. In spite of that, we clearly identify that official sites promote the strong points and the potential of the destination but not emotional and personality values as bloggers do. Bloggers' self-personality affects their image

perception, and elements of this personality and emotions are more easily attached to bloggers' texts than to official tourism texts.

4.1.2 Spatial component and geographical distribution of image: bloggers' disproportion and concentration

With regard to the four image components present in perceived-transmitted image (cognitive, affective, conative and spatial), the spatial one, in particular, has been very little studied. However, in this research it has been seen to be very important and visible in travel blogs as tourists spatially locate their images by associating them with specific destinations and places within destinations.

This component gives certain attributes, cognitive, affective and conative images to destinations and is related to the visibility or invisibility of places in perception. Perception, especially in tourism is spatially organized (Golledge & Stimson, 1997). Our perception of the environment is partial, discontinuous and fragmented. It is this spatial image which directs tourists to their objectives and can act as an organizer of activity (Lynch, 1960). Golledge and Stimson (1997) explain that human behaviour, choice and decision-making are highly conditioned by space or the "operational environment" and that space activates the decision-making process. According to the authors, the more familiar the environment is, the more information we are capable of encoding since humans tend to perceive a world of identifiable things which provides them with consistent images (Golledge & Stimson, 1997).

In our case of study, Catalonia, the spatial and orientational component of bloggers' tourist image was mainly studied through the classification of information by the same bloggers and reviewers, and also by their mentioning of the different territories and destinations. In the case of Catalonia, the whole territory is composed of several regional brands which were studied in relation to image. Travel blogs and reviews, with their spatial organization, enable users to express their images spatially in a symbolic way.

We clearly observed that tourists coincide in the places they perceive and give importance to, probably due to the preconceived image they have of the destination and also due to what Lynch (1960) explains: spatial image is collectively shared and coincidences occur with members of the same socio-cultural groups. Tourists express their image spatially, therefore space cannot be detached from image perception. The view of tourists is highly concentrated on the tourist space of Barcelona.

The first relevant aspect concerning the spatial component of image or spatial image distribution is the geographical disproportion, imbalance and concentration observed in bloggers' perceived-transmitted images. Of the eight studied regional tourist brands of Catalonia, Barcelona brand clearly stands out from the rest and is the one by far given most importance, in a way eclipsing the rest of the territory. Already in the analysis of the most frequent words, "Barcelona" was the most frequent both on official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews, but with a much higher disproportion or concentration in the case of travel blogs and reviews in which "Barcelona" was five times more frequent than the second most frequent word, while

on official tourism websites in the word “Barcelona” is only about fifty percent more present than the second word.

What is more, we observed that the brand territories are mainly described by or concentrated on a few specific elements, places or destinations that are repeated in the majority of blogs, and not by a wide range of attraction factors and places within their boundaries. For example, Catalunya Central’s image is almost totally related to Montserrat; Costa Barcelona to Sitges, carnival and wine/cava; Costa Daurada to PortAventura and archaeological sites; Costa Brava to the Dalí Museum; Pyrenees to nature and active tourism, etc. This aspect is very different from the image projected by official tourism websites where many places and attractions are described of all brand territories and none seems to stand out from the rest.

This territorial disproportion in the creation of blogs about certain brand territories is partially related to the real incoming tourists in the different brands. Barcelona has the highest number of tourists, more than double the second brand, Costa Brava, and more than three times more than Costa Daurada. However, this disproportion is not maintained in blog creation, instead the inequality among brands is far increased up to an extreme. Barcelona is the brand with the majority of entries (82.5%) followed at a great distance by Costa Brava (6.84%). Not even the order of incoming tourists corresponds to the order in blog creation as after Costa Brava comes Costa Barcelona (6.79%), and Catalunya Central (1.71%) before Costa Daurada (1.55%), which is the third brand for the number of incoming foreign tourists but the fifth for blog entry creation. It seems that the information within travel blogs not only reflects much more the outstanding tourist sites and is more concentrated in certain elements, but also reflects much more the disproportion among the brands and Barcelona’s centrality (as two of the brands that are most mentioned are neighbours of Barcelona: Costa Barcelona and Catalunya Central).

The geographical concentration of blogs and reviews can also be seen in that among the most frequent words, remarkably, only three specific destinations appear: “Barcelona”, “Girona” and “Montserrat”. By contrast, in the case of official tourism websites the geographical distribution of the most mentioned words is regular among all of Catalonia as the four capitals of the area appear: “Barcelona”, “Girona”, “Lleida”, “Tarragona” and also the “Pyrenees” and “Costa Brava” region and brand, and the “Empordà” region.

Concerning the mention of the different brands and the destinations or municipalities within them, we observed a similar phenomenon. On official tourism websites, the different brands and their destinations were mentioned in a more or less balanced way, in which almost all brand territories had a significant site-wide density (Costa Brava (18.24‰), Pyrenees (9.45‰), Costa Daurada (8.18‰) Barcelona (7.68‰), Terres de Lleida (6.13‰), Catalunya Central (4.94‰), Costa Barcelona (4.18‰). However, in the case of travel blogs and reviews we observed a great disparity of mentions: while Barcelona brand and its destinations had a very high site-wide density of 32.88‰, the next mentioned brand territory, Costa Brava, had only 4.66‰, Costa Daurada 2.37‰ and Costa Barcelona 1.38‰, and the rest had less than 1‰. Pyrenees, for example, was importantly mentioned by official tourism websites but was much less mentioned by bloggers. Great dissonance is found in this matter, again showing the great

territorial imbalance in tourists' images online, which are concentrated, tirelessly, in Barcelona and its attraction factors, while official sites promote all territories including minor brands.

This spatial disproportion and concentration could indicate that the tourists coming from very distant countries, with tight schedules, that come to Catalonia and write blogs, mainly visit Barcelona, its top attractions, and its surrounding areas (Costa Barcelona, with Sitges, and Catalunya Central, with Montserrat, and the famous Costa Brava, with the Dalí Museum and Girona). All these brands are close to the capital and usually day-trips are organized to them. Barcelona has been found to be a very "legible" city according to Lynch's (1960) denomination, as the bloggers and reviewers perceive very specific parts of it, very clear elements, easily identified and found (Gaudí, Ramblas, etc.). In this sense, Barcelona and its sights have a really "effective image" (Lynch, 1960) as they are distinctively identified, the city conveys clear spatial relationships and patterns, and for most bloggers it has a strong emotive significance, as demonstrated in feelings and dichotomies results. Besides, the differences between the proportion of incoming tourists and of blog and review entries per brands could also be due to the fact that the type of tourists going to Barcelona are more keen to write blogs, and not, for example, the tourists going to Costa Daurada, who may be more tourists from the proximity, or who may be interested in other things.

We observed that official tourism websites promote different regional brands together and that some of them have strong correlations. For example, Costa Brava and Pyrenees were strongly correlated; Terres de l'Ebre and Costa Daurada; Barcelona, Costa Barcelona and Catalunya Central, were strongly correlated too, probably due to their geographical proximity and to the fact that they can be visited together and complementarily. Accordingly, cluster analysis showed that for Catalunya Central and Costa Barcelona, one of the best predicting variables for the brands' presence is the Barcelona brand itself, showing that on official sites the appearance of these geographically close brands, its destinations and attraction factors depend on the presence of Barcelona itself, in a complementary way. Official tourism websites try, therefore, to reflect the ties among geographically close brands, brands that were previously together, and to expand the tourism of one to another.

In contrast, bloggers and reviewers do not seem to correlate brands with one another (the strongest correlation is that of Pyrenees and Terres de Lleida). Some significant correlations, although weak, were found between Terres de Lleida and neighbouring brands with a clear relationship with it such as Pyrenees and Costa Daurada. In fact, they hardly seem to mention any of the brands' "names" apart from Barcelona, or to mention destinations within the brands all together. Cluster analysis showed some dependence of brands such as Pyrenees or Costa Daurada on "Barcelona attractions". Interestingly, some significant negative correlations were found in blog and review images between the main brand, Barcelona, and the two other most touristy brands, Costa Brava and Costa Daurada, which means they are slightly exclusive to one another. In this sense, bloggers' geographical distribution is not inclusive of several brands at the same time but more exclusive among the major brands. Although most bloggers write about Barcelona, if some of them write about Costa Brava and Costa Daurada they tend not to do so at the same time, in the same entry about Barcelona.

This probably means that these three brands have enough entity to be considered as destinations in themselves by some bloggers, deserving separate blog entries, which could show a slight consolidation of these two brands in the eyes of some tourists apart from the Barcelona brand itself.

In general we observed that in the eyes of bloggers and reviewers, the regional tourist brand of Catalonia was not visualized as such, as a united major umbrella brand with different minor territorial brands all linked by it. This concept of the main brand through which the minor brands articulate does not exist or is given little importance in bloggers' accounts. We can see this in the fact that the word "Catalonia" appears in the 298th position among most frequent words, while Barcelona appears in first place and Spain in eleventh. In this sense, we see that both Barcelona and Spain geographical references are much more used than the Catalonia geographical reference, which could be a sign of the consolidation of these two brands in the eyes of tourists, but not of the Catalonia brand.

If we concentrate only within Catalonia's territory, among its regional brand names, the only brand mentioned very importantly is Barcelona, followed, at a great distance, by Costa Brava (the second most recognized in 522nd position), Pyrenees (1031st position) and at an even greater distance, Costa Daurada for some specific bloggers. Indeed, it is very remarkable that the most powerful brand of all in the eyes of tourists is eminently that of Barcelona. This brand is not just much more powerful than the Catalonia brand but also more mentioned than the Spain brand itself. In terms of the regional brands' names we observe a great dissonance between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. Some regional brands are unmentioned (or unknown?) by tourists. However, in the case of official tourism websites the names of the brands are much more used and, for instance, the "Costa Brava" brand appears among the first fifty words on official tourism websites.

Regarding the fact that what makes information sources images more influential is their belonging to a salient and coherent brand (Morgan et al., 2002), we must say that Barcelona and Spain have consolidated very prominent and probably influential brand images, whilst the Catalonia brand or the other regional brands have a far minor presence and potential to influence in this sense.

All in all, this concentration shows bloggers' images expressed online could be seen as very narrow and incomplete, only focusing on certain places (mainly Barcelona) and certain specific elements (such as Gaudí or others) within each of the brands. This issue may have strong implications for destination perception, tourist products and diversification of tourists' flows into different spaces, especially if, as we shall see, user-generated image is gaining weight online and may be increasingly influential as it has a great potential for image dissemination.

4.1.3. Image and its relation to identity

Regarding **Catalonia**, in general we observed that the average times official sites mention cultural and geographical identity references is higher than the average times mentioned by travel blogs and reviews.

In terms of cultural identity references and intangible heritage we can appreciate a fundamental dissonance as shown in table 4.5: travel blogs and reviews seem to concentrate more on Spanish identity and on elements such as flamenco and tapas, and hardly mention Catalan traditions, dances and cuisine. Regarding cultural identity references, although official sites promote Catalan identity more strongly, they (continue to) see Spain as their main destination, Spanish identity as their main reference and not so much Catalonia. Catalonia's Mediterranean identity is not mentioned very importantly by these tourists either.

Bloggers and reviewers correlate the dominant Spanish identity most strongly to European identity, and in second place to Catalan identity. In bloggers' texts, Spanish identity has a relatively low standard deviation, meaning that this identity is well spread and present among files as most bloggers consider it to be the main cultural and geographical reference. By contrast, Catalan identity has a higher standard deviation. However, for OTWs, Catalan identity, the most promoted one, is most strongly correlated to European and global identities than to Spanish identity. However, a high standard deviation of Catalan identity in OTWs indicates that although this identity is the most promoted, it is not regularly promoted in all files, and therefore it may not be projected homogeneously or effectively for readers to perceive it as the strongest identity. Catalan and Spanish identities are not strongly correlated in any of the cases.

Correlations of different identity backgrounds and intangible heritage elements also show that OTWs give more emphasis to elements related to Catalan identity and travel blogs and reviews emphasize correlations with Spanish identity more strongly. In this respect, bloggers correlate certain intangible heritage elements more strongly to Spanish identity: the "siesta" "tapas" and "paella" (elements of the stereotypical image of Spain). Besides, although not very strong correlations of intangible heritage elements are found with Catalan identity, the elements most tied to it by tourists are: Castellers, fireworks, Festa Major and Sant Jordi.

In turn, OTWs correlate the intangible heritage elements most strongly to Catalan identity: two traditional Catalan festivities, two elements related with Catalan cuisine, two elements related with traditional Catalan drinks, and one traditional Catalan folkloric element. Quite strong correlations are also found of the Mediterranean identity to "seafood and fish", "sardana" "bread with tomato", "fresh food and vegetables", etc., probably in an attempt to reflect the Mediterranean culture and lifestyle.

Intangible heritage is probably the part of culture most related to cultural identity and which best reflects it as it is composed of traditions and cultural events, folklore, customs, dances and music. However, for both OTWs and travel blogs and reviews the intangible heritage category or attraction factor is the least dense of all, meaning that in general these elements are the least present of all. Having made this clarification, it must be said that although official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews have similar (low) densities of intangible heritage elements, the nature of these elements is very different in one or other case.

In general, Catalan-specific celebrations and events with a very specific Catalan cultural identity are more mentioned by official sites whereas internationally popular traditions, with a more global identity, are more mentioned by bloggers. This shows how within bloggers' image, specific Catalan traditions are rendered almost invisible compared to other, more international traditions. In addition to that, OTWs do not promote them strongly enough to make tourists aware of them.

Concerning folkloric elements and customs, we observed that specific Catalan customs (castellers, giants and dwarfs, etc.) have similar densities in both types of texts. This could indicate an image identity consonance between official sites and travel blogs and reviews and the fact that bloggers consider them important. However, the folkloric elements that bloggers promote the most are those related to a Spanish stereotyped cultural identity such as "bullfighting" and "siesta". Results also showed an important dissonance in terms of dances and music probably meaning that tourists either do not know or do not value the autochthonous Catalan dances and music as much as the typical Spanish or even international ones. Catalan identity, as reflected in local cuisine, is not very present either within the online image transmitted by bloggers and instead the stereotyped Spanish dishes are very strongly present. In general, however, OTWs do not promote the traditional Catalan dishes very strongly either. However, OTWs notably promote Catalan cooks and haute cuisine, which elements completely unknown or invisible in tourists' texts. The most mentioned drink, wine, is an autochthonous Catalan product, but also an international one. Both types of websites coincide in the first element but are dissonant in the rest.

Despite the Catalan language being probably the most fundamental sign or representative of Catalan cultural identity, we observed a very low presence of it on both types of websites. The scarce presence of Catalan and the shallow way in which it is presented by blogs and reviews shows that sometimes they probably have a biased, indifferent, or even negative view of it. Most tourists do not consider it as an added value to the destination or do not know about it.

An interesting issue is the relationship of Catalan identity with Barcelona and Gaudí (the two major attraction factors of Catalonia according to bloggers). Although heritage tourism is one fundamental type of tourism to maintain and foster a national identity (Pretes, 2003), in the case of Catalonia and Gaudí we are not sure this identity is understood by or transmitted effectively to tourists. Tourists do not see Barcelona or Gaudí's buildings associated to a very strong Catalan cultural identity background, and this should be strategically improved.

Table 4.5.

Cultural identity (Catalonia)

CATALONIA	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS	OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES
Identity reference order	<p>They do not follow logical ascendant geographic order (from local to global). The most mentioned identity is 1st Spanish (3 times more frequent than Catalan). 2nd Catalan identity, 3rd European, 4th Mediterranean, 5th global identity.</p> <p>This order could be explained because especially bloggers who come from overseas (which are the majority) may not be aware or may not have accurate information about distinct local-regional identities, cultural minorities and nations without state in Europe → they take Spain as a whole as a main reference (which has a strong consolidated international image).</p>	<p>OTWs follow ascendant geographical identity reference order (from local to global). The most strongly present is 1st Catalan identity (3 times more frequent than Spanish), 2nd Spanish, 3rd Mediterranean, 4th European and 5th Global identities.</p>
Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references	<p>Most prominent identity reference: Spanish.</p> <p>Among the most frequent words is: Spain (11th position) and Spanish (14th)</p>	<p>OTWs promote the Catalan cultural and geographical identity references very strongly with a significant density. Among the most frequent words are: Catalonia (2nd position), Catalan (9th) Catalunya (26th). Spain only appears in 20th position</p>
Bloggers' view on Catalan language	<p>In general we observed a clear misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about Catalan language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many tourists think it is a mixture of other languages: Spanish, French... - More than 1/3 of travellers who mention Catalan are surprised (even annoyed) by it, or consider it problematic to find a language different from Spanish. - About ½ of travellers who mention it do not explain it or just comment on it without any judgment → This confirms the scarce presence of Catalan identity elements and the little interest in them. 	<p>The presence of Catalan in OTWs is scarce too and very shallowly explained. Some pages, exceptionally, explain the Catalan language slightly more extensively but the great majority do not.</p>
Traditions and cultural events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They mention very strongly "Carnival" and "religious traditions", which are well rooted in Catalonia but are not specifically Catalan traditions. - Bloggers are not aware of the cultural events in the Catalan hinterland or they do not think they are worth mentioning. - The Castanyada is not mentioned at all by bloggers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They mention quite strongly "Carnival" and the "religious traditions", which are well rooted in Catalonia but are not specifically Catalan traditions. - We observed that several cultural events located in the Catalan hinterland are mentioned almost only by OTWs (although not very strongly). Some Catalan-specific traditions are hardly mentioned. - Festivities such as Sant Joan and Sant Jordi are more strongly mentioned by official sites (although not very strongly).

Folkloric elements and customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Spanish identity customs have the highest density: bullfighting, siesta...- Specific Catalan customs (Castellers, giants and dwarfs, etc.) have some density but much lower than other elements related to Spanish identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Specific Catalan customs (Castellers, giants and dwarfs, etc.) have some density but not very high.
Dances and music	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Very strong identification with “flamenco” dance (the highest density of all intangible culture elements) → strong Spanish identity and not originary from Catalonia.- “Sardana” (the most representative dance of Catalan identity) is about 6 times less mentioned by bloggers than Flamenco and equally mentioned as “salsa” (an international dance).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- “Sardana” is the dance with a highest density. Although the Sardana is the most present, it does not have a very high density or a high average presence per file, and elements representative of the Spanish identity such as flamenco are almost as frequent in OTWs.
Food and drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- They mention very strongly the typical internationally well-known Spanish dishes related to Spanish identity: especially “tapas” and “paella”.- International fast food is mentioned four times more by bloggers.- Catalan traditional food is hardly mentioned.- Catalan cooks and high quality Catalan cuisine are almost unknown → not interested?- Most mentioned drinks: 1st wine, 2nd beer (international identity) and 3rd sangria (Spanish identity).- Cava is also importantly mentioned by travel blogs and reviews, conveying Catalan identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Traditional specific Catalan dishes are importantly mentioned by OTWs.- Catalan cooks and high quality Catalan cuisine are intensely promoted.- Most mentioned drinks: 1st Wine. Notably, cava, the specific Catalan Champagne, is more mentioned by OTWs.

Source: Author

If we observe cultural identity image at the level of smaller **brands**, in the case of travel blogs and reviews all brands have Spanish identity as their main identity reference (the strongest correlations can be found with Spanish identity) as seen in Table 4.6. By contrast, official tourism websites establish stronger relations of brands with Catalan identity or even Mediterranean identity (stronger correlations are found with Catalan identity). This again evidences the contrast between both types of files: bloggers relate Catalan brands more to Spanish identity and OTWs to Catalan identity.

If we look deeper into bloggers' and reviewers' views, Spanish cultural, geographic and linguistic identity dominates. Catalan identity is much less mentioned, and usually accounts for about one half of the density of Spanish identity and always comes in second place. The order in which all brands are identified is: 1st Spanish, 2nd Catalan, 3rd/4th European, 3rd/4th Mediterranean and finally Global. Mediterranean identity is more important for some coastal brands (Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada), in third place.

Remarkably, the brands with most prominent Catalan identity in the eyes of tourists (although Spanish identity is always first) are in this order: Pyrenees, Catalunya Central and Costa Barcelona. The major brands (most entries and most real numbers of visitors), especially Barcelona and Costa Brava, are the most strongly related to Spanish identity while smaller brands (less mentions and less incoming tourists) such as Catalunya Central, Pyrenees, Terres de l'Ebre and Terres de Lleida have a slightly stronger Catalan identity component.

In bloggers' brands texts, we observed many elements of the Spanish myth such as flamenco, bullfighting, tapas, paella, Spanish popular drinks, etc. We also saw some elements related to Mediterranean identity such as seafood and fish for some brands. The only elements with Catalan identity that are prominent for some brands are: cava and castellers.

Table 4.6. *Cultural identity per brands*

BRANDS	TRAVEL BLOGS AND REVIEWS
Barcelona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most strongly associated to “flamenco”, then to “carnival”, “bullfighting”, “religious traditions” and “siesta”. Quite notably, three of the most mentioned intangible heritage elements in Barcelona, (flamenco, bullfighting and siesta) are linked to very strong Spanish identity and to the Spanish myth. Both carnival and religious traditions are well rooted in Catalonia but have an international identity. Catalan-specific traditions are much less dense in this brand. - Cuisine and drinks: most strongly associated with tapas, then seafood and fish, international fast food and paella. Both tapas and paella belong to the Spanish myth identity while the other two have a clear international identity. Bread with tomato is hardly mentioned in general, just slightly in Barcelona. Similarly the most mentioned drinks are “wine”, “beer” and “Spanish popular drinks” with international and Spanish identities. - Barcelona is, in general, the brand most associated with Spanish myth intangible heritage elements, cuisine and drinks.
Catalunya Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Sant Jordi” and “fireworks” are the most strongly related elements to the brand. Sant Jordi (strong Catalan identity), fireworks (used in Catalan festivities but have an international identity). - Cuisine and drinks: associated to “paella”, “tapas” (marked Spanish identity), international fast food, and seafood and fish (international-Mediterranean).
Costa Barcelona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Carnival” is the most prominent element by far (famous Sitges Carnival) followed by “fireworks”. Both elements convey an international identity. Then come “festa major” and the “castellers”, two eminently Catalan traditions. Castellers are a symbol of Catalan identity. Spanish myth is not strongly reflected. - Drinks: both “wine” and “cava”, with a strong Catalan identity are most present in Costa Barcelona, which comprises the Penedès wine and cava region. - Cuisine: the two most prominent elements for their brands are seafood and fish (Mediterranean identity) and tapas (Spanish identity). International food (such as breads, European and Asian food) is most concentrated in Costa Barcelona.
Costa Brava	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher density of “carnival”, “siesta”, “fireworks” and then “flamenco” and “Spanish guitar”. Again this brand is associated with international identity elements (carnival and fireworks) but especially to elements of the Spanish identity and myth (flamenco, siesta and Spanish guitar). - Drinks: Stronger association with wine and then beer, two internationally known products. - Cuisine: the two most prominent elements for their brands are seafood and fish (Mediterranean identity).
Costa Daurada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most strongly related to “castellers”, then to fireworks, then to “giants and dwarfs”, “Halloween” and “Carnival”. Remarkably, the identity of the most prominent intangible heritage is Catalan identity (castellers and giants and dwarfs). This brand is also related to international celebrations such as fireworks, Halloween (probably related to PortAventura) and Carnival. - Cuisine: Association to “seafood and fish” and to “international fast food” with a clear international identity.
Pyrenees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More strongly related to “carnival” than “Spanish guitar” and “Halloween”. According to this datum, the brand is seen as international and Spanish. - Cuisine and drinks: Associated to “tapas” and “international fast food” but also to some Catalan-specific products: “olive oil”, “snails” and “Catalan protected origin vegetables”. It is probably the brand with the most marked Catalan identity in terms of food. The most mentioned drink is wine.
Terres de l’Ebre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only associated to “bullfighting” (Spanish identity). - Cuisine and drinks: Association to seafood and fish, a speciality of the area, paella and international fast food. The most mentioned drink is wine.
Terres de Lleida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most strongly associated to “Castellers” and “giants and dwarfs” (Catalan identity), and to “Carnival” and “siesta” (international and Spanish identity). - Cuisine: Most strongly associated to seafood and fish, and to other products such as olive oil and snails, traditional from this area. - Drinks: The most mentioned drink is wine.

Source: Autho

Within tourist image identity, understanding cultural identity is fundamental because of the implications it has with the territory and its people's culture and identities. It is of the utmost relevance for the case of Catalonia, a cultural minority region within the tourist-famous Spanish state. We have attempted to see what identities (Catalan, Spanish, Mediterranean, European or global) were the most mentioned both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews, as well as the different intangible heritage elements and food and drinks, mentioned because of their strong connection to a certain cultural identity background.

According to Govers (2010), brands may have gaps, among other aspects, in terms of brand performance, which entails how well the identity elements of the brand are transmitted during the experience on-site through multiple products and experiences; we may have identified that Catalonia has a relatively poor brand performance (online, *in situ*, etc.) at least as reflected in tourists' accounts. Which cultural identity is most mentioned and appreciated can be seen in which elements are most associated with each brand and which cultural identity background they convey. We observed a dissonance in this sense as the image of bloggers is full of elements of the Spanish myth. Flamenco and bullfighting especially are still importantly present, although official tourism websites promote Catalan identity more. It seems that the products and experiences *in situ* do not make the tourists perceive Catalonia as a representative brand of the Catalan tourist destinations. The actual experience does not change the Spanish geographical reference and stereotyped image and is unable to make bloggers see Catalonia as the vertebrating brand and a wider spectrum of territories, attraction factors and identities.

If in addition to this minimized presence of the Catalonia brand, tourist official image does not seem to reach the tourists in certain important aspects, we could assume that the expectations created by tourists will be made in other identity backgrounds and not in Catalan identity. The Catalonia brand is not present or consolidated in the eyes of tourists, their geographical reference is more often Barcelona or Spain than Catalonia. The brand that works for Catalonia is actually the tourist brand of Spain in terms of cultural identity, which may be harmful for Barcelona (Oroval, 2011).

The most prominent elements of Gaudí and Barcelona are not very strongly associated by bloggers with Catalan identity. They are more associated with Spanish identity. If we add this to what we have seen regarding intangible culture in general (which more defines cultural identity), neither the Catalan language nor Catalan intangible heritage are given much importance. In the case of Catalonia, it would seem, according to the Catalan tourism plan that, in spite of tourists' expectations, to promote Catalan cultural identity and Catalonia's intangible heritage seems a priority. However, the official Catalan sites do not seem to give much importance to Catalan cultural identity given that, as Papson (1981) partially explains, both public and private sectors "stress the qualities most likely to attract outsiders" and "consequently, government and private enterprise not only re-define social reality but also re-create it to fit those definitions".

The idea we extract from the results is that although official tourism websites promote more strongly Catalan-specific intangible heritage elements, they do not do so very strongly or very insistently, and other traditions belonging to a more Spanish identity are also promoted alongside. In the case of bloggers, they mention more strongly the intangible elements belonging to the Spanish myth (flamenco, bullfighting, siesta), international elements (such as carnival) and Catalan-specific elements much less strongly. We should ask ourselves how

we can expect bloggers to get to know autochthonous Catalan intangible heritage if not even official tourism websites promote it very strongly and promote other identity elements sometimes with the same importance?

Moreover, travel blog and review image has been found to be much more based on **stereotypes** (of all kinds) than official tourism websites. As seen in tables 4.5 and 4.6, although bloggers and reviewers do not have a political intention *a priori*, they reflect much more Spanish central discourse, the discourse of stereotyped Spain and the Spanish myth, which appears on many occasions. The specific image held by online users and expressed through the social media present in travel blogs and reviews deserves major investigation in relation to the formation and transmission of stereotypes and to the role these may exert in the complex context of Catalonia.

It seems that tourists' global image, as seen in travel blogs and reviews, is much simpler than the one on official sites and is based on specific elements and not on diversity and variety. Tourists' views are extremely fragmented and partial, while official sites try to give an all-encompassing view. This indicates that the tourists' vision is eminently stereotyped. This phenomenon may be due to the fact that it is the tourists residing in very far away countries who write most about Catalonia. Results show that the four countries that write most about the destination were the USA, the UK, Canada and Australia, three of which are located in other continents. This confirms that tourists coming from the furthest countries tend to concentrate more on must-see sites, have less information about the destination (Richards, 2002; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991), and probably have a more stereotyped or a shallower image of the destination.

We observed how the preconceived images and definitions of place on which tourism depends (Papson, 1981) have been identified in this research in the form of stereotypes which reflect very specific and repetitive attraction factors and feelings, and which also reflect the stereotyped cultural identity image of Spain. These stereotypes, although not present in all files, can be found in a wide spectrum of bloggers' and reviewers' accounts. Pre-existing stereotypes condition and mediate the tourist experience and how the tourists perceive it. They create underlying structures of representation and interpretation of places, cultures and peoples. A stereotype creates strong expectations and can even, "be so strong that it can lead a tourist to see something that is not there" (Laxson 1991 as cited in Andsager & Drzwiecka, 2002). We see places and cultures through stereotypes, stereotypes which might refer to the general attribute-based identity and may refer to certain uses of space, from which the destination cannot detach despite the efforts local authorities and the population may make. In terms of cultural identity, stereotypes may contribute to diluting, simplifying and even modifying the cultural identities of local communities, especially in the cases where implanted stereotypes differ from the local population's (socially constructed) culture and the community's conception of itself. The tourist image of Catalonia shown in travel blogs and reviews is composed of stereotypes that are very difficult to change as they move by inertia, they prevail and are transmitted and retransmitted. As Andsager and Drzwiecka (2002) ascertain, stereotypes are very difficult to combat.

We observed that tourists' images still reflect many elements of Spanish nationalist discourse or the "Spanish myth" when describing Catalonia meaning that these images continue to be projected (by other agents, media, by the same tourists, etc.) despite the fact that official tourism websites may be projecting a different image. This "Spanish" tourist

image is again and again transmitted through the social media to other users. According to Mercille (2005), repetition of the message has a greater influence on the perceived image. As Poutet (1995) explains, the mystification of the Spanish image was achieved by cultural image simplification in a “ludic and folklorized way”, without any apparently negative elements present. The image of the Spanish paradise, where all is permitted of this colourful exotic country where you could drink unending sangria was created. This is reflected in tourists’ cultural identity stereotypes.

Stereotypes, as Almeida and Buzinde (2007) demonstrated, are not bad in themselves and may serve to identify local communities. However, in the case of Catalonia, the stereotypes held by tourists are mainly those of the Spanish myth, hence the image struggles to reflect the society’s struggle too. The Spanish stereotyped image present in travel blogs and reviews potentially contributes to homogenizing the cultural identity image of the whole of Spain, erasing differences, diversity and divergences of cultural minorities within the state. They contribute to hiding local and autochthonous identities. Indeed, one of the goals of the Spanish nationalist propaganda within tourism during Franco’s regime was that the tourists themselves would become propellers of that image and effective agents of propaganda (Correyero & Cal, 2008). In a way, with the very inertia of the myth they achieved that goal.

For example, in part bloggers’ tales reflect the image of “sunny Spain”, so attached to the uncontrolled developism of tourism and mass coastal tourism. This myth is important for some coastal brands (Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava and Costa Daurada) although bloggers value many other elements such as their cultural heritage. Indeed, the Spain of mass coastal tourism was built on certain elements: the 3S (Sea, Sand Sun) issued from the 3Ds (Development, Decontraction and Diversion) of the leisure societies, and then adopted a specific form in Spain based on the “españolades or andaluzades” of the 3 Iberian Ss (Sex, Sun and Sangria) or even the three Fs (Flamenco, Football, Franco) (Poutet, 1995). At this point we observed the junction of general attribute-based identity to specific cultural identity.

The image of Spain=Andalusia, identified by both Poutet (1995) and Fernández (2007), is present to an important extent in tourists’ accounts. This can be seen in the frequent mentions of “flamenco” dancing and “bullfighting”, among others. We also observed the nightlife and partying attraction factors (which includes sex) as being more concentrated in coastal brands (Costa Daurada and Costa Barcelona), as well as the sun, and the mentioning of Spanish popular drinks (which includes sangría). This mythical Spanish image is called by Poutet (1995) the “Spain of pacotilla” and it was promoted along with the sun and the beaches and the fiesta that never ends. These elements are present importantly in the tourists’ accounts but are almost inexistent on the official tourism websites (except for flamenco, which is mentioned to some extent). In fact, the flamenco element and fashion were the standard of the Franquist Spanish united cultural identity (Poutet, 1995). This element (flamenco), is extremely present in tourists’ accounts, it has the highest density of all the intangible heritage elements, meaning at least that this element is ascribed to Catalonia as if it was a cultural tradition of its own. In the eyes of bloggers, flamenco is the most worth mentioning intangible heritage tradition of Catalonia, the one that is most vividly transmitted online to other users. Some of the differential Catalan identity attributes present in some enlightened travellers’ accounts in the early days of tourism, such as “hard-working” and “wealth” (Font, 2010), cannot be seen within tourists’ accounts as, for

example, adjectives related to “modest/poor” are about twice as frequent as adjectives related to “luxury/wealthy”.

Another symbol of this Spanish stereotyped-Andalusian identity is the bullfighting tradition, which is also not originary from Catalonia, although some Catalan traditions do have to do with bulls, but not in the “corrida” or bullfighting way. Bullfighting and siesta are the two elements within traditions and events most mentioned by bloggers writing about Catalonia with very high relative densities, while official tourism websites hardly mention them. Another element mentioned by Poutet (1995), which for him represents this mythical or idyllic stereotyped image of Spain, is paella. Here, we can also prove that paella is much more present than autochthonous Catalan dishes or other foods. After tapas, paella (the most mentioned food also conveying a strong Spanish identity), is the second most popular or mentioned food by bloggers and reviewers who have visited Catalonia. However, official sites barely mention this dish.

Both Poutet (1995) and Fernández (2007) coincide in that tourists played a fundamental role in spreading and assuming the Franquist Spanish stereotyped image of Spain. Today in travel blogs and reviews, we can still prove that part of this image is still being spread and transmitted by tourists to other tourists. Today the rate of re-transmission is unlimited and instant and the potential it has to perpetuate the image and to reach other tourists is unimaginable. Although it could be assumed that tourist image cannot exist without stereotypification of some kind, if at least in this case they were Catalan identity stereotypes they would reflect parts of the local culture, but because they reflect the Spanish ones they are reflecting a cultural identity which is not autochthonous to the area. Fighting established stereotypes is very difficult but it must be pursued by local authorities.

The social media are an opportunity to break this tendency or to perpetuate this adherence of the stereotyped image of Spain. The criticism of Poutet (1995) that Spain is “a country that continues essentially to sell the sun and its beaches, and that hasn’t stopped attaching itself to flamenco and to the dresses with flounces for every event having an international repercussion”, is completely valid, although the official tourism websites of Catalonia promote other elements with a Catalan identity. As well as in the case of Almeida and Buzinde (2007), changing stereotypes from tourists’ mind depends a lot on their attitude and predisposition. The community or the destination where tourists are *in situ* must try to raise tourists’ awareness, make them part of the local identity, make them know the identity issues present. As Lynch (1960) explained, the development of image is a bilateral process between the observer and the observed, and it is possible to strengthen the image someone perceived *in situ* through symbolic artefacts, through the re-education of he who perceives or remodelling the environment.

4.1.3.1. The dual role of tourist image towards cultural identity. Economy of identity

This research has shown the great divergence of images, especially in terms of their cultural identity. Intangible heritage has been found to be the least important element both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. If countries and peoples define their identity in relation to image and representation also to the exterior this may have important implications.

We argued how tourist image identity has the capacity to influence place identity, and even the place itself, physically. What type of identity is propelled becomes of the utmost importance for destination evolution, transformation and development as it transmits different expectations and entails different uses of space. In this sense, the type of tourist image identity projected in tourist images can have a dual, either positive (helping the enhancement of local cultures) or negative (contributing to the dilution or destruction of the same), role of tourist image towards the cultural identity of the destination.

In the case of Catalonia, in terms of the positive or negative effect that the studied image may be exerting, it can be said that the role played by official sites' image, although being positive to the promotion and enhancement of the local (Catalan) identity and culture, is insufficient to broadcast the local culture and influence tourists' perceptions, not just because official sites are much less visible online, but because the cultural identity and intangible heritage elements they contain are not sufficiently promoted. The Catalan language is not well explained and Catalan intangible heritage is not significantly present. This may be due to the fact that official tourism websites combine several goals that may be contradictory: on the one hand they try to persuade potential tourists to come to Catalonia by meeting their expectations, while on the other hand they aim to promote certain values and cultural identities that the tourists may not be aware of and that may not correspond to their expectations.

In the case of travel blogs and reviews, their online images may be having a negative effect on the autochthonous Catalan identity, as they do not seem to value enough the local identity and are sometimes indifferent or even annoyed by the local language, traditions and cuisine. More importantly, they promote and transmit the main elements of more global identities, especially of the Spanish one, which includes the re-transmission of the elements of the Spanish myth.

One of the main ideas extracted from Almeida and Buzinde (2007) is that the visualization of the identity struggle through storytelling by locals serves to affirm and maintain their community's identity. However, this might not be the case of destinations such as Catalonia, where this local identity struggle remains, in aspects such as the Catalan language, hidden from the tourists' view. The fact is that in both Catalonia and in Humbolt Park "the interaction with outsiders worries locals and brings to their attention how others view them" (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007).

In a complex identity destination such as Catalonia, this research confirms the existing identity conflict or struggle among the analysed images which can be summarized in that bloggers mention and value Spanish cultural identity much more while official sites seem to give greater value to Catalan cultural identity. The online image projected by bloggers or tourists has a very significant role in this identity struggle as the image that bloggers project in general may contribute to diluting the local identity into the Spanish and the more global ones. In this case the discourse bloggers project is not the "hegemonic, or official, discourse of nationalism" (Pretes, 2003), at least not of the official Catalan one, but to a considerable degree they are echoing the elements issued during Franco's tourism developist policies, the image of a nationalist stereotyped Spanish identity. The image the majority of bloggers project is that of Spanish stereotypes, of the Spain of "pandereta" (Galí, 2002). However, a temporal study should be performed in order to see the evolution of bloggers' image and to see if the identity evolves towards a more "autochthonous" one. Moreover, a significant

group of bloggers (not the majority) does mention Catalan cultural identity and its intangible heritage elements and is aware of them.

From the point of view of the economy of identity, differential cultural and general identities are an added value to tourism. Although this economy of identity seems to thrive in Catalonia's official image in terms of tourism, what Anton (2010) says about the communicable local cultural products that should accompany such local identity boost cannot be clearly identified on official tourism websites. Hence, they should be built, as especially intangible culture is hardly mentioned. "The identity must be able to be defined and differentiated through a series of attributes that will make up what is known as the associated 'image'. Finally, these attributes, this 'image', must be explained and valued by the demand; it must be attractive to draw their attention" (André, 2010). Promoting local cultural identity is key to competitiveness (Anton 2010) and to attract quality, cultural tourism.

Tourism must be seen as an opportunity and as a medium through which to broadcast a message about oneself, history and culture (MacCannell, 1976). Official sites should really try to persuade and better explain the autochthonous culture at the pre-trip stage and educate about it, but this becomes more necessary especially during the on-site experience phase when they are more in control of the image displayed. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) acknowledge that visitation or direct experience of a destination is likely to modify the perceived image of the destination, hence the importance of trying to influence tourists' image *in situ* and to broadcast the destination's message. Once *in situ*, tourists want to capture the destination through souvenirs, photographs, postcards, etc. that reinforce the image they have (Anton et al., 2008). In this sense these objects should be different and break the established non-desired stereotypes to show an autochthonous Catalan image. The influence should be exerted at this stage as Kim and Richardson (2003) note that "actual visitation to a place often causes people to change their images of it". This is the moment of greatest intensity of the tourist process.

The image tourists transmit in travel blogs and reviews (when their trips are over) reflects the performance of the destination *in situ* as the transmitted image is an image of experience (tourists have usually visited the destination when they write about it). The contact with, uses and characteristics of place are an element that influence destination perceived image formation. The experience *in situ*, in contact with the space of use is a primordial source of influence on image.

Identity is fundamental for the brand to exist (Morgan et al., 2002). This identity is often attached to nationhood. A nation-brand identity is composed of history, language, territory, political regime, architecture, sport, literature, art, religion, education system, icons, landscape, music, food and drink, and folklore (Dinnie, 2008). In this respect image congruency in terms of cultural identity among official images and tourists' images is very important to see the effectiveness of promotion of a brand of a destination. "Nation branding" (Dinnie, 2008) is a tool usually used by official tourism organizations to reduce such identity-image gap, by identifying prejudices and misperceptions and by enabling the dismantlement and opposition to several negative forces. Giswold (2004 as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007), recognizes the capacity of social agents to manage social interactions to project certain impressions in the desired way in what the author names "identity work", which should be largely improved. This gap can affect culture and the economy.

Although the will to apply “nation-branding” or to do “identity work” and to promote a tourist image based on autochthonous identity became a priority in Catalonia with the 2005-2010 tourism Strategic Plan, we observed that elements such as the language and the intangible culture were underrepresented in official tourism promotion. Catalonia struggles with not being perceived as it would like to be. “Simply initiating a nation branding communication campaign often does not combat the underlying factors that influence the public’s current image of a country. Therefore, it is important to have a holistic strategy that includes understanding the current state of a nation’s brand, identifying the many factors that influence it, developing a strategy (through more than just an advertising or public relations campaign), implementing that strategy, and tracking progress over time” (Agustine, 2009). For cultural identity image to be effective it must be easily recognisable and attract attention (André, 2010). The Catalan cultural identity image in OTWs probably does not give enough emphasis to certain elements of Catalan identity. On the other hand, the cultural identity promoted is not well understood by tourists either (represented in travel blogs and reviews), as the elements conveying a strong Catalan identity are underrepresented in the bloggers’ accounts.

If the information is already not clear and we add the fact that official tourism websites are much less visible than other types of media such as travel blogs and reviews, the promotion of an autochthonous identity becomes invisible in the eyes of foreigners.

What seems to be clear is that the effect of official sites on tourists’ images (pre-visit) and the performance of the destination itself (*in situ*) are insufficient at the moment to change the well-established stereotyped image of Spain in the eyes of tourists. In the case of Catalonia we could deduce that the space of use is not prepared enough to explain Catalan identity or to influence the tourists’ image in a way that it better matches the official image. As shown in Mariné-Roig (2011b), the environment *in situ* is not still transformed according to the new desired Catalan image and has plenty of remnants of the old Spanish stereotyped image, notably in the form of souvenirs. Experience is central to the tourist experience (Volo, 2010b; Cohen, 1979), tourism is about experience and can only be lived by moving to another place and experiencing. The experience someone lives depends on several factors of which many are personal, subjective or internal, and that shape the “essence of the experience”, but it also depends on external elements and on the preparation of the “offer of the experience”.

According to Pitchford (1995), the condition *sine qua non* for tourism to serve the local will and identity is that communities or governments must be empowered and only then may tourism serve these groups to rehabilitate their devalued culture. In theory, the Catalan government and territorial-local governments are empowered in terms of tourism competencies and policies. However, in terms of image, empowerment of local governments in the era of the Internet and of the social media means becoming visible, attractive and popular on the Internet, which for the moment does not seem to be the case. There are many techniques to make websites visible and position them well in the rankings that should be explored and encouraged by official organizations.

According to Almeida and Buzinde (2007), ethnic tourism is one type of tourism that is capable of fostering and reinforcing local identities. Ethnic tourism is usually interested in local cultural identity and intangible heritage. However, for official tourism websites, this intangible heritage or ethnic aspect of Catalonia is forgotten. As Taylor (2001) argues,

“demands for different cultural experiences are a major world trend”, hence, official tourism websites should give much more emphasis to Catalonia’s cultural difference. Moreover, they should monitor specific blog and review spaces such as those specifically related to “Local customs” in the site VirtualTourist.com as these type of spaces can give precious insight into how tourists see local identity and traditions.

As commented above, the modern concept of nationhood is formed through the contrast with others, through difference and sameness, through inter-nationality and home. We form our identity in relation to space and to the other. This will determine how people will act and behave in certain situations. Images enable both tourists and inhabitants to identify themselves as a cultural group or nation *vis-à-vis* others.

4.1.3.2. Expectations, satisfaction and familiarity in relation to cultural identity

Satisfaction and expectations are aspects known to condition tourists’ actions and perceptions. Tourists always compare what they experience to what they expect (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). In Catalonia, it seems tourists get what they expect in general as the adjectives used are positive. However, in terms of cultural identity, specifically with the Catalan language, the few who mention it express different opinions, some of them not matching their previous expectations, as many do not previously know about Catalan at all. Hence, it seems the authorities do not provide a good explanation of the language. Perhaps in the attempt not to disrupt tourists’ images what the destination is doing is to give ambiguous images: enough for some tourists to perceive the existence of the Catalan language, not enough to explain it to them before their arrival and while they are having the experience. Caton and Almeida (2008) warn that expectations can be dangerous in the cultural terrain especially when mediated by stereotypes and exoticism, which is actually what the Spanish stereotyped image is mediated by. It is dangerous because locals are pushed to match the expectations of tourists and to change their culture (we just have to see the presence of multiple Spanish stereotyped images in Barcelona).

As Anton (2010) commented, the identity elements or the symbolic value of places are what generate certain expectations in tourists. Expectations are fundamental for satisfaction. Hence, given the disparity of images and identities created, it may be the case that official image does not correspond to the expected identity by tourists or, seen from another point of view, tourists’ expected identity of the place may not be what local organizations would like tourists to see and may be projecting other images that could generate dissatisfaction.

In this sense, as Poutet (1995) noted, although many parts of Spain want to detach from this Spanish cultural identity image, it is so deeply rooted that “it never stops sticking to the skin of Spain”. Tourists expect that image. Interestingly, as mentioned by Fernández (2007), the image of a Spain not resembling Andalusia created rejection among tourists for being too similar to Europe. Catalonia is a country with a culture closer to the European one in many senses, hence, even today, local tourism organizations promote and describe Catalonia a little bit to reflect this Andalusian identity so as not to scare tourists or create rejection and for them to “recognize it” (Fernández, 2007). This may be why official tourism websites promote both flamenco and sardana with similar intensities.

This potential tourist dissatisfaction is what explains the fear of contradicting or not fulfilling tourists' expectations in terms of image. In this sense, as Morgan and Pritchard (1998) explain, very often marketing and branding logics make the expectations and wishes of tourists their only guide to manage destinations. This is why nowadays most cities in the word resemble one another, because they answer to similar demands and expectations (Huertas & Frenández-Cavia, 2009). We contend that official tourism websites must try to influence tourists' perceptions in the way that most benefits the destination, its inhabitants and the local culture.

We must say that this complete subjugation to tourists' expectations is not the case of Catalonia in the case of general identity as official sites act in a politically correct way showing many attraction factors and different types of tourism for each region (although tourists are concentrated in fewer elements). Even if official sites do not promote and explain Catalan cultural identity and intangible heritage very clearly, they do not promote Spanish cultural identity either and promote Catalan identity more. However, to counteract the strong Spanish identity image bloggers have, official tourism websites should promote Catalan identity and intangible heritage elements very strongly. In this sense, for Catalonia we observe the "contradictory tendencies of sameness and difference" that Hugues (1995) mentioned; on the one hand official sites promote a certain Catalan identity and certain attraction factors for each zone, but in the desire to promote everything in each region and not to frighten tourists with a different language and identity, leave things partially completed.

In this regard, they may be too concerned with "familiarity" (Andsager & DrZewiecka, 2002) present in many tourism media which serves to reassure tourists and influences their perceived images either by image exposure or actual visitation. We observed that in general tourists are not familiar with Catalan identity, or at least not as familiar as with Spanish identity. In this sense, we think these stereotypes could be counteracted by local organizations without provoking tourists' very abrupt unfamiliarity with the destinations' identity once *in situ*. Although familiarity is very often based on the search for the stereotypes already in mind, if familiarity is related to both attractiveness and effective responses (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002) the on-site environment could be prepared in a way that it would be attractive whilst showing the autochthonous identity.

Official sites should repeat, repeat again at the destination, etc. to influence the tourists. Kim and Richardson (2003) proved that exposure to some information sources such as films on a destination did not increase their familiarity with it. However, we think that exposure to tourists' accounts in general and to the social media could greatly increase familiarity as tourists would see the destination through others' eyes, through others' real experiences. Indeed, according to Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) familiarity is strongly based on on-site experience. All in all, as Mercille (2005) also points out, audiences may interpret messages differently from what they mean due to other representations, wider discourses, popular knowledge, etc., which means that it is not only necessary to reach the tourists through Catalan identity image projection but also to explain it, to make them understand, which is lacking on official sites.

In some periods of history, Catalonia has tried to use tourist image to boost its autochthonous identity, especially after 1992 Olympics. Today, local organizations are

promoting the Catalan identity and certain unique attraction factors, but with the Internet they should do so more strongly.

4.1.3.3. Identity dissonance between official tourism websites' and travel blogs and reviews' images

This research has contributed to further exploring the nature of the dissonance between projected and perceived images in terms of image identity. It has been stated that multiple representations of a destination exist and coexist without necessarily being congruent with one another. Stabler (1988) distinguished between the image associated with the demand side of economic theory (person) and the supply side (destination), and stresses the importance of assessing how well they correspond to one another. Power struggles and image dissonance were clearly identified between official tourism images (the supply side, in this case present on official tourism websites), or at least destination-produced images (closer to what the local population thinks), and tourist-user-generated images (present in travel blogs and reviews). Although destinations, through their tourist organizations, try to propel certain images, these clash with the tourists' opinions and images in some or several aspects.

Through the existing differences and contradictions between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews we can see that power struggles are reflected in the tourist image of Catalonia. "Power, identity, meaning and behavior are constructed, negotiated and renegotiated" (Aitcheson and Reeves 1998, as cited in Almeida and Buzinde, 2007). Power struggles are increasingly being held online and should be sought online. Now, interactions and struggles among agents thousands of kilometres apart that would not have coincided previously do so now on the net. The Internet is becoming the arena par excellence to look for these power struggles among different images.

Perceived tourist image is socially constructed, it is constructed through interaction and social relationships and shared meanings. This social character of image can be seen in that travel blog and review images are similar from user to user, and repeat similar concepts and identities, and more dissimilar from official tourism websites, which also repeat more similar images. This is in accordance with the creation of culture from an interactionist perspective in which "*cultural objects* are perpetuated and transmitted through their repeated expression and through the socialization" (Griswold 2004, as cited in Almeida & Buzinde, 2007).

Identity is a fundamental part of the power struggle (Palmer, 2005). Regarding general attribute-based identity, in terms of tourist attraction factors probably the most important dissonance is that bloggers concentrate on Barcelona, Gaudí and good feelings, while official tourism websites promote all the territories in a more balanced way, promote Catalan identity and do not have Gaudí and his works as one of the main elements within this promotion. As previously commented, in our results we especially saw a struggle in terms of cultural identity, on the part of official tourism websites, to promote a differential Catalan identity from that attached to Spain in a stereotyped way. They try to attach a Catalan identity to the territory and to promote plenty of attraction factors. However, travel bloggers and reviewers do not purposefully enter into an identity or image struggle. However, we could deduce that official image is, at the moment, competing with the social

media image, at least in the sense that official sites are trying to project a certain image which coincides online with the bloggers' image which conveys different elements, values and identities.

In general, to certain extent official tourism websites reflect the political and social discourse (or ideology) of Catalanism related to Catalan culture, to progress and innovation, to modernity and heritage, to closeness to Europe, etc. to the detriment of Spanish national discourse. This discourse is not projected without contradictions and nuances in terms of identity (Palmer, 2005). The fact that tourists expect the typical Spanish identity and that frictions exist on a political level means the discourse of Catalanity is not as consistent, well-constructed and communicated as that of Spain. On the official tourism websites we see the attempt to differentiate Catalonia's tourist image from that of Spain. We see the struggle between the discourse of Spanish centralism and that of peripheral distinctiveness aiming to be its own master. The fact that official sites in this socio-political context promote Catalanity reflects the ideology of the ruling governments and probably the will of the population. It seems "moral" for the Catalan society to recover its right to be known for the distinctive culture and identity it has, to be compensated for the damage caused by Franquist propaganda. As we can see, the "Spanish" discourse present in the tourist accounts is being perpetuated "by employing established representations of destinations, cultures, and people in various forms of promotional media" (Almeida, 2008). In this case, the tourists employ stereotypes and Spanish cultural identity clichés to interpret what they see. Indeed, "ideology may be described as a frame which helps to make sense of and rationalize experience" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002) even if tourists are not aware of it.

Furthermore, the dissonance between the projected image produced by the destination (official sites) and the perceived-transmitted image produced by tourists indicates that the circle of mutual influence exerted by projected and perceived images is not working well, in this case from travel blogs and reviews to official tourism websites and vice-versa. The flows of mutual influence might be broken by several elements and communication may not be effective. The projected images feeding into that circle most strongly and reaching tourists are not the official image. We should assess the relevant aspects which can explain such dissonance and the potential to influence and the nature the different images have, which in fact are challenges for local tourism organizations.

4.2. Progression of user-generated image versus official image

The challenges faced by official tourism organizations may be related to the increasing popularity and influence of UGC, the loss of image control, low visibility, the fact that online images in blogging (and probably the social media) are dominated by English and by very distant tourists, etc. Today, the new power struggle in destination image creation must be sought between agents and users. This is well reflected by the differential images shown by official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews.

4.2.1 Expansion and increasing use of UGC and travel blogs and reviews

Today, Internet communication plays a dominant role (Govers et al., 2007a) and has become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information (Lin & Huang, 2006). Notably it has become a tool to obtain travel information and for tourism transactions and communication (Pan et al., 2007; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). There is no doubt that

tourists are increasingly relying on Internet sources for tourism and travel information, as several studies demonstrate (Govers & Go, 2003; González, 2010; Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Cox et al., 2008a,b, etc.). In terms of tourism, the effect of online communication is great because of the information-based nature of tourism products (Krizman & Belullo, 2007).

However, the Internet is not a single agent communicating and shaping images, several online agents play a role in this new arena and influence tourists in many ways. This new scenario needed an adaptation of Gartner's (1993) model classifying image-projecting agents into one considering the online agents, which we have aimed to provide in this study. Almost all offline agents have adopted online communication, and new exclusively online agents have been born. We argue that this new online scenario is changing the power of the different agents and their capacity to influence in a way that users (web 2.0 communication) are empowered in comparison with other types of agents such as official tourism websites. As Molina and Esteban (2006) explain, the value of image-projecting agents depends on their image reaching the tourists and satisfying their interests and needs. In our analysis of official tourism websites (traditional agents now projecting image online along with other offline media) and of travel blogs and reviews (exclusively online social media web 2.0 user-to-user devices), we observed and can argue through the results of different studies that travel blogs and reviews seem to be gaining influence and power online over official tourism websites.

We suggest that the potential to influence of User-Generated Contents, web 2.0 and more specifically travel blogs and reviews is increasingly due to their increasing creation and acceptance and to their trustworthiness. Moreover, they have a major capacity to meet tourists' needs and interests. Several reports and studies confirm and mention the expansion in the creation of blogs in general (Technorati Report, 2008; Jones & Alony, 2008; Bosangit et al. 2009; Marine-Roig, 2010; Pan et al., 2007, Filgueira 2008) and of blogs in tourism or travel blogs (Technorati Report, 2008; Carson, 2008; Bosangit et al. 2009; Law, 2009; Bosangit and Mena, 2009; Pühringer and Taylor, 2010). Not only have we been able to collect data on the travel blog hosting websites (2010-12-1) but we have also corroborated that the blogs about Catalonia have expanded.

Furthermore, several authors agree that the influence exerted by the content of travel blogs and online social media will continue to grow (Crotts, 1999; Bosangit and Mena, 2009; Mack et al., 2008; Akehurst, 2008; Pan et al., 2007; Lin and Huang, 2006, etc.).

In the case of Catalonia, we found that the tendency is also that a growing number of users are posting blogs and reviews on the destination, especially travel reviews. However, this general tendency is not linear and is quite irregular depending on the travel blog source in the case of Catalonia. We found that some websites hosting travel blogs had a decreasing number of entries about Catalonia: realTravel.com (RT), TravBuddy.com (TY) and TravelPod.org (TP). However, TripAdvisor.com had a surprisingly high, growing number of blog and review entries about Catalonia. This website alone accounts for the enormous increase in entries about Catalonia occurring in 2011 as in previous years (2008 and 2009), probably due to the economic crisis, the entries about Catalonia had decreased. This may indicate that although travel blog sites continue to be used, review sites (containing blog-like entries) are growing quicker, and TripAdvisor.com probably concentrates a large amount of information today.

It should be noted that despite the general tendency for blogs in general and blogs related to tourism to grow every year, this does not mean that the creation of blogs on a specific destination does so equally. Other unexplored factors such as fashion and tendencies, economic crisis, different prices and rates, natural disasters, social or political unrest, terrorist attacks, special events, etc. play a role in the increasing or decreasing tendency of creating travel blogs and reviews about a specific destination.

In absolute numbers of files, however, we clearly saw how the data are shared on an epic scale in web 2.0, specifically in travel blogs, as we can observe with our data collection just 3,124 files were found among all the official tourism websites of Catalonia, and instead, a total of 27,104 files were found about Catalonia in just 9 travel blog and review hosting websites. And this is only one specific type of social media, especially in English. We do not know about other social media (facebook, twitter, photos, etc.). The total amount of words about Catalonia written by tourists is far higher than on official tourism websites. Just in terms of raw quantity, the information present in these travel blog and review websites is superior.

All in all, the tendency today is that the creation and influence of UGC and travel blogs and reviews will be accrued in the future, with the generalized use of the Internet in this process, the dilation in time of the purchase process as tourists consult multiple sources and build their packs themselves, the great interaction with other users through web 2.0, etc. In this context, users' opinions become highly credible, more than official tourism organizations' (González, 2010). Tourists are engaging increasingly in web 2.0, which is attractive and advantageous for them in many ways. It integrates information innovatively, users are co-creators of knowledge, and the distribution of information becomes horizontal and not hierarchic.

4.2.2 Trustworthiness of UGC and importance of the different sources throughout the tourist process

The trustworthiness of images and of their sources, which conditions the potential influence of images upon tourists, is a basic parameter of Gartner's (1993) classification into organic and induced images. Indeed, the main difference between induced and organic images depends on the control the destinations' agents have of them (Choi et al., 2006) and their capacity to influence depending on their credibility. In this sense, according to the adapted model of Gartner's classification, official tourism websites are among the online Overt induced I agents, which are the agents placed furthest away from influencing the tourists, the ones that destinations control the most, that tourists least trust. However, travel blogs and reviews, the social media and UGC in general are highly trustworthy as they belong to the online solicited organic sources (or unsolicited organic) as usually they are equivalent to friends' recommendations. These sources are controlled by the tourists or users themselves, and can be seen as similar to word of mouth communication (e-WOM). Usually, people who read them are looking for specific travel information from independent reviewers who have nothing to win or lose by posting comments.

In the eyes of tourists, UGC in general and travel blogs and reviews are seen as highly trustworthy, more than traditional agents, as they do not project images with the intention of obtaining economic benefits or to persuade tourists to go to a certain place, as the majority of agents including official organizations do. In the case of official tourism websites

we could say they have an “economic benefit intention for the destination” or a “socio-cultural, political intention” which more or less aims to benefit the whole destination and its inhabitants.

However, travel blog and review communications and postings are moved by the intentionality of “social relationships, recognition and leisure”. The very motives of travel blogging are mainly social: in general social contact and recognition, to express and seek opinions or self-expression, to think by writing and introspection, to release emotional tension, a need for intellectual or artistic activity, etc. (Jones & Alony, 2008; Cox et al., 2008a). Specifically for travel blogs: to 1. Update family and friends of whereabouts (Bosangit & Mena, 2009; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Pühringer & Taylor, 2010), 2. Share experiences with others, 3. Find information about places, 4. Keep a record of travels, 5. Keep in touch with friends who are also blogging, 6. Network or meet new people, 7. Express self by writing, 8. Entertainment, 9. For passing time (Bosangit & Mena, 2009). These motivations render travel blog images and opinions more credible, from equals to the tourist, from no-one wanting to manipulate them or take their money, hence their relevance and potential of impacting tourist image formation.

Likewise, the intentions of those reading the social media or the blogs may have changed and not be merely to search for information for a future trip, but also to socialize with other people, to entertain themselves and dream, to exchange information, etc. (Casaló, 2009). Until now, projected image present in the media was almost always directed at the tourist, it had the purpose of reaching the tourist and influencing him/her. All agents intended their view to become dominant. Now, the goal behind a great amount of information present in the social media is not to influence the tourist but is more directed at the self (socialize, express oneself, etc.). As Casaló (2009) explains, such self-directed purposes may be to find: who am I? Where do I belong? What is important for me? What do I get from others?, etc.

The repercussion tourists’ accounts may have on other tourists can be great as these are “actual experiences, unlike commercially prepared tourist guides or media reports” (Lin & Huang, 2006). Bloggers provide evaluation, feedback and recommendations to others (Bosangit et al., 2009). The content is replete with value judgements. As Bosangit (2009) explains, although the main readers of the blogs are friends and family, about one third of the questioned bloggers received comments from the general public, showing that a good number of people may be reading them. These platforms and their contents are particularly close and available to the tourist, they are not controlled by any foreign organization and they are written by tourist-peers (people interested in similar things). This personal connection makes their content, therefore, highly credible and trustworthy.

Concerning the importance of different kinds of online media throughout the tourist process, when planning a trip or making decisions, it seems that still today some results suggest that official tourism websites are the most important source of information for both users who regularly use UGC for travel planning and for those who do not (Cox et al. 2). However, a tendency can be observed supporting the increasingly influencing image formation of UGC and the social media. “A US-based report by iProspect and Jupiter Research found that approximately one-third of consumers were influenced by social content sites when making purchase decisions. While these sites may not necessarily make consumers decide to purchase, they can have an impact on [...] reputation” (CDC Sustainable Tourism). Moreover, for those who usually use UGC for tourism purposes, the importance of

official information and image is lower. Although the majority of users considered state tourism websites the best information source when planning a trip, UGC users felt much less this way (18% less) (Cox et al., 2008a). Although these results might not be very significant they indicate that probably those who are most familiar with UGC for travel and tourism are relying on it more and more, and that official information and image are losing ground compared to UGC.

The transmitted image within travel blogs is increasingly helping to build other pre-visit images that will later be contrasted, with the experience *in situ* becoming fundamental. UGC and especially e-WOM are powerful elements influencing perceived destination image formation, especially before the trip, but also after it. More and more tourists consult other peers' opinions not just before booking a trip or hotel but also during the whole trip in general. Travel blogs help direct the gaze of tourists by making them look the sights and aspects already described by them. Now, huge quantities of pre-trip information, influencing pre-trip image are available through the social media and hence pre-trip promotion is no longer dominated by outsiders (tour operators) (Dann, 1996) but by users. The potential in this sense is enormous.

This pre-trip image is formed during the "planning phase" when the search for information is more vivid, and it conditions both the decision-making and tourist behaviour during the later trip, the tourists' expectations, etc. (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). At this stage, tourists already become dream travellers to the destination. The intangible nature of tourism products propitiates the influence of word-of-mouth prior to the trip (Burgess et al. 2009). These images from fellow travellers, previous to the tourist experience itself, become really handy and valuable information for the future tourists during the planning phase. According to Cox et al. (2008b), UGC in tourism reassures the tourists' decisions once the possibilities have already been narrowed down. The prescriptive capacity of user-generated content becomes determinant within the travel cycle and process for a growing number of people.

Some users are especially engaged in the process of planning the trip with web 2.0 and the social media, notably travel blogs, at least those who are familiar with online environments and who usually post online and participate in online travel communities, travel blogs. Especially, for some groups of independent travellers, information within travel blogs is very important when planning their trips (Carson, 2008). UGC and e-WOM will potentially have a profound influence on the image formation of tourists who are most familiar with web 2.0 and especially of those who use it, spend more time with it and are themselves bloggers and reviewers. Digital natives especially may spend several hours per day online and hence may be strongly influenced by the image transmitted in travel blogs. These (unknown) peers to the tourist are considered highly credible and potentially influential as their image is transmitted as e-WOM, despite the fact that some studies (Burgess et al., 2009) may raise concerns about their credibility. Blogs may not be as credible as traditional word-of-mouth but neither are other methods of communication (Mack et al., 2008). Despite the potential to post 'fake' content, what tourists do is not trust just one opinion but compare several opinions and texts and then obtain their own conclusions.

The type of tourism interests (cultural, business, sun and beach, etc.) and the geographical distance from the destination seem to affect the influence UGC may have on tourists. "Those users who were planning long haul, fly-drive or city breaks were more likely to trust user-

generated reviews than were those who were taking beach breaks” (Cox et al., 2008a). The type of tourism interests of the tourists (cultural, business, sun and beach, etc.) and the distance from the destination and the mode of transport used seem to affect the influence that UGC may have on these people. However, what cannot be doubted is that this influence is very strong for some travellers and that it will probably grow stronger for all kinds of travellers. For example, Stangl (2010), argued that different motivational factors affected how prone users were to reading blogs online depending on their degree of sensation seeking as travellers. This indicates that relaxation seekers such as the tourists mainly coming to Catalonia for the sun and the beach are less keen to search for extensive information in blogs, but come to socialize and have fun. This means, therefore, that adventure seekers may be prone to reading more UGC content on blogs for planning and take it into consideration. Many sun and beach tourism destinations intend to broaden their tourist public by attracting these adventure seekers, probably more interested in culture and nature. However, it is probably the latter who read more on blogs and that take the information into account, and therefore official tourism websites have less influence on them. This could explain why, although the sun, sea and sand has been and is probably the most famous type of tourism in Catalonia, this is not reflected in travel blogs and reviews, as this type of tourists may not be so interested in consulting or publishing user-generated contents.

Moreover, this trustworthiness and growth in influence of User-Generated Content, may have important implications for destinations if we consider that it is the tourists residing farthest from the destination who tend to write most about it. These tourists probably have a more distorted, stereotyped or shallow image of the destination but are, however, the ones most transmitting the UGC online about the destination.

4.2.3 Unequal visibility and usage of travel blogs and reviews vs. official tourism websites

We found that official tourism websites’ potential to disseminate image is low if compared to travel blogs’ and reviews’ potential in the case of Catalonia. One way to see this potential of influence is the online visibility of both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. We based visibility or popularity measures on indexed pages of both types of sites. The results show that in the case of Catalonia, travel blogs and reviews have a much greater visibility and potential to reach other tourists, to appear in search engines, etc. (and probably not just a greater potential than official tourism websites but also than the majority of public or private tourism websites).

We observed through the simple but significant visibility measure of indexed pages in search engines that travel blog and review hosting sites had a lot more indexed pages than official tourism websites (at least than the official tourism sites of Catalonia, a well-consolidated world tourist region). If official tourism websites are reflecting the image closest to the population’s will, in this case the will of the population is not visible online. These results seem to coincide with a global tendency, as due to their characteristics, web 2.0 websites are extremely search engine friendly (Gretzel, 2006; O’Connor, 2010). Favorable characteristics in search engine environments are frequent updates and numerous hyperlinks, which is distinctive for web 2.0 sites due to the engagement of a huge amount of users (Xiang & Gretzel, 2009). Therefore, even consumers who do not know anything about

web 2.0 or the social media increasingly use UGC as a source of information because “sites are advantageously ranked by search engines” (Stangl, 2010).

The visibility disproportion is huge: taking Google search engine as a reference we observe that the official tourism websites which have a major number of indexed pages (which, in addition include administrative and other types of information) were GenCat.cat (8,210,000) and Spain.info (1,510,000). These numbers were much lower than those of travel blogs and review websites where the leading websites were Tripadvisor (with 116,000,000 indexed pages) and TravelPod.com (11,400,000). Moreover, the travel blog and review website which had the lowest number of indexed pages of the ones analysed (TravBuddy.com with 282,000) had a very high visibility anyway, while the website with the lowest number of indexed pages (Costa Daurada, with 439) had a very low online visibility.

Concerning the transmission of information through the social media, we observed a similar phenomenon with altmetric data: in general, travel blogs and reviews were far more present in several social media than OTWs.

Hence, we clearly see that the power travel blog and review websites have to broadcast and transmit certain images is much stronger than that of official tourism websites. Not just the general social tendencies indicate that users rely increasingly on their fellows, but also the positioning-visibility within the Internet demonstrates the superiority of travel blog and review hosting websites to project and transmit tourist image.

Moreover, in the case of official tourism websites we observed that the better or worse positioning of the specific brand websites did not depend on whether the brand had more or less real incoming tourists. In this sense, BarcelonaTurisme.com, which corresponds to the Barcelona brand and which has the highest number of blog and review entries is not one of the most visible websites. However, very small brands with small numbers of tourists such as VisitValdAran.com (Vall d’Aran) is one of the most visible sites with 115,000 indexed pages. However, CostaDaurada.info (Costa Daurada) which is the third most important Catalan tourist brand in number of incoming tourists is almost invisible online as it only had 439 indexed pages. Hence, it seems that the influence of official tourism websites in tourism flows is minimal in the case of Catalonia as it seems that the visibility of websites does not affect the total number of visiting tourists nor the number of blog and review entries created about them. This shows how UGC creates its own tendencies.

These visibility measures suggest that for a destination or for a brand, being present and visible in UGC becomes fundamental. In general, if a destination or brand are not present in this UGC user milieu, this implies “total invisibility to potential tourists who are going through the inspiration, research and planning phases of their next trip” (González, 2010). In this case Catalonia can be said to be notably present in the travel blogs and reviews sites but not in the way official organizations intend. Catalonia as a whole destination or as a brand territory hardly ever appears as the main geographical reference and only some specific destination within it (especially Barcelona) or some sites are present in the blogs and reviews. This could imply Catalonia’s invisibility as a definite, united and distinct territory. Therefore, we should ask what image is being transmitted online among users? Is that image according to our will?

Regarding usage, results showed that the audience or users of travel blogs and reviews come from all over the world. There was a strong presence of Asian countries, the USA and the United Kingdom, while OTWs had a mainly Spanish audience. This showed a major international projection of travel blogs and reviews. If few entries or posts about a destination can threaten its “reputation stability” (González, 2010), this is not the case of Catalonia’s destinations which have thousands of entries on travel blog and review sites. Hence, the 2.0 image of Catalonia’s destinations and sights (not of the Catalonia brand or territory) seem to be consolidated and stable according to this premise, however, further temporal studies should be conducted to analyse its temporal changes and transformations. But, what is being said about them does not coincide with the official destination-produced image.

4.2.4. Local organizations’ loss of control over user-generated images

Online communication has changed both the way information is transmitted and the influence this may exert both on tourists from all over the world and on the destination itself and its inhabitants. Time and space constraints related to tourist image transmission dilute or disappear. Several agents propel image through the Internet, including tourists, and interact with one another. The Internet is a channel through which multiple agents project images.

We maintain that this breaking of the image-projecting circle, where official image does not seem to influence tourists very strongly, can be explained in a context where user-generated image transmission local organizations (and traditional agents in general) are probably having less and less control over destination image and hence image dissonance between official image and user-generated image may become greater and greater. In this sense, a change in the power of the different agents and actors in the image constructing circle may be occurring and agents such as DMOs with the official tourism websites are probably losing ground to user-generated contents and images.

Official tourism organizations face several challenges in relation to web 2.0 and the possible representative dissonance between the official image and user-generated image online. Morgan et al. (2002), among other challenges, identified the lack of overall product control by local tourism organizations. If destination organizations already had a difficult task in managing destination image before the arrival of the Internet, now it is even more difficult to control it at all as images multiply and change vertiginously quickly.

With the irruption of the Internet, the lack of overall product control is exacerbated. Local authorities and promoters are, on the one hand losing ground in image control as a multiplicity of images is constantly created and transmitted through the net, with various authors and purposes, which may be created by users who are probably more credible than official propaganda. User-generated images are increasingly created and consulted by other users or peers to the tourist. “Marketers now have much less control over what messages reach consumers about their products” (Adler, 2007, in Cox et al., 2008a).

The social media are the major means to socialize in the Internet era. The information available now for the user through e-WOM is much greater than that available through traditional WOM. Therefore, their potential influence is huge, nowadays it is through them that the creation and transmission of culture should be sought.

With regard to the influence upon perceived image exerted by the media, with the social media the theory that users are empowered and resist and avoid manipulation by interested agents might gain weight. The user-generated image which becomes dominant is an external image to businesses or organizations which have interests in influencing the tourists. Through web 2.0 and travel blogs we observe an empowerment of users.

We suggest that, despite the fact that official tourism websites influence the perceived image of tourists and that they are an important tool for image, communication and marketing for these destinations (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009), these sites may not be coping well or finding their place with 2.0 and social media communication. They may have less and less influence compared to UGC which may be increasingly influential. Still today, studies show that the vast majority of people still find official tourism websites are a very important source of information (Cox et al. 2008a,b). In spite of that, and in spite of the fact that many people see them as very reliable and trustworthy, official organizations must be alert to the UGC image and act consequently and also incorporate web 2.0 devices or linkages within their websites.

Both Burgess et al. (2009) and Cox et al. (2008a) warn local tourism organizations that they cannot ignore the rising popularity of sites containing UGC and the role and influence they play in tourists' behaviour and decision-making. As Park and Gretzel (2007) pointed out, today with the pressure to lower budgets it becomes difficult for official tourism organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of their websites, return on investments and need for improvements. Following the online user-generated image can help to do that, to see if the image we want to transmit is really getting through to tourists. Probably, the time gap mentioned by Huertas (2008), between the appearance of new technologies and their incorporation into tourist websites is occurring now: users are ahead of tourism organizations and have embraced the new 2.0 devices and use them actively. However, just now tourism organizations are starting to apply them to their websites and promotion strategies (Gretzel 2006, in Cox et al., 2008a) and possibilities of interactivity are still very low on official websites (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). However, Park and Gretzel (2007) point out that interactivity is one of the main factors needed for websites to be successful. In the society of sharing through the social media, official tourism websites should promote this interactivity or sharing among users and become "Destination Management Systems" (Fernández-Cavia & Huertas-Roig, 2009). If not they may lose important ground of influence. However, the study of Fernández-Cavia and Huertas-Roig (2009) reveals that these devices are scarce on official tourism websites. The study of Huertas et al. (2011) aimed to "demonstrate empirically that interactivity is a key factor in maximizing the visibility of tourist destination websites". If websites have interactive devices they are usually more visible online.

If official tourism websites are well positioned in the search engines they have great possibilities to influence the people, as visibility augments. Having a varied international audience could also help. Moreover, if they incorporated UGC devices they could raise their positioning in search engines (Cox et al., 2008a,b). Although they cannot control the image being transmitted about them online, they have to face possible image distortions or exaggerations that may be transmitted by tourists.

In spite of the loss of image control, on the other hand, official tourism website promotion and images have the opportunity to reach people and places unthinkable before, and to

appear at the top of the list of search engines such as Google. In this sense, these agents are also incorporating 2.0 devices into their websites to keep up with the trends and to be able to influence tourists in a major and more credible way. Moreover, the other restriction of image projection pointed out by Morgan et al. (2002) which is budget, seems to have ameliorated with the Internet. In this sense the Internet also opens new possibilities to local authorities' image projection to become cheaper, so the budget problem could be solved, although nothing guarantees effective communication. In this sense, new professions are appearing such as the post of community manager, who is someone hired to look after the social networks and interact with users. Besides, despite the efforts, nothing prevents the lack of overall product control and the existing political pressures.

Therefore, in the era of user-generated content and blog transmission of information we should ask if, no matter how much effort the destinations put into image projection, can they really influence the tourist? For us the answer is yes. The destination managers have a golden opportunity to influence tourists when they are at the destination and before they transmit image online. DMOs should make sure the desired image is well transmitted *in situ*, well-coordinated with the multiple agents and in accordance with the physic appearance of the destination itself. In this sense the study of Mariné-Roig (2011) on souvenirs in Barcelona detected that in this case, the image transmitted *in situ* does not correspond to the innovative image, especially in terms of cultural identity, that city tourist managers and the inhabitants desire. In this case, the author suggested greater coordination among different agents, and more control of *in situ* image should be undertaken to break down undesired stereotypes and to influence tourist image perception as much as possible.

In this respect, official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews are placed at the same level online and, in principle, have the same potential to attain tourists. However, data show that official websites are positioned in a much worse online position than travel blog hosting websites. If to that we add all the advantages of web 2.0 for users and UGC trustworthiness, we ascertain that official tourism websites should really try hard to gain a good positioning, to make their sites as attractive and visible as possible to tourists, to incorporate web 2.0 to their sites, to influence tourists while on-site, to explain their ideas patiently and through multiple channels. As Clever et al. (2009) point out, web 2.0 can be an opportunity for traditional agents which will have to evolve by merging two different ways of communication to survive.

4.3. The need for a new paradigm when perceived image becomes transmitted image

As seen in the previous sections, this research contributes to shedding light as to the nature of the perceived-transmitted image by tourists which has, in general, been much less accessible and less studied. Web 2.0 and the social media open a window into perceived-transmitted image that was unavailable and unthinkable before, without even contacting the tourist, without moving, with no economic cost, with no entry barriers to accessing information. This could turn around the imbalance between the extensive study on projected images and the less studied perceived images. Now, tourists' image is freely accessible for study, everywhere and at every moment.

Although we assume that the image reflected within travel blogs and reviews is not exactly the raw perceived image of the destination, as it has been produced and selected to be made public, or it may contain exaggerations, it does reflect the perceived-transmitted image that can have a major social repercussion and influence, because it will be transmitted to society, to friends and relatives, to unknown people through blogs and reviews. This is why it is so relevant. What tourists talk about and explain about destinations in 2.0 spaces such as blogs is a reflection of an elaborate *a posteriori* image. The travel blogs and reviews represent a post-trip image, one that has been evaluated, an elaborated overall image suitable to be made public that has already undergone a process of selection of certain elements and not of others, which may be idealized but that results in the social image of the destination. Blogs are created in immediate *a posteriori* image, when memories are still fresh.

It is of the utmost importance as it is the perceived image tourists want to transmit. This is why we denominate this type of image “perceived-transmitted” image. Returning to Anderson’s (2008) metaphor comparing the blogosphere with the brain: the content of blogs may not reflect the deep unconscious structure of the brain [the raw perceived image] but the conscious thought [transmitted image]. The perceptions, feelings, opinions, thoughts, experiences, descriptions, etc. are what the tourist has perceived and has consciously chosen to transmit to others. UGC blog websites have the highest proportion of ‘think by writing’ comments (Cox et al., 2008a). The writing in travel blogs and reviews implies the conscious effort of the tourists to re-present their experiences and the visited place, a conscious selection and production process. These Kaleidoscopic views of a destination within blogs (Pan et al. 2007) shape the overall online user image. In a way they reveal to other show they see the world.

We could also call this transmitted image the “social or public perceived image”, as it not only embodies what the tourist thinks and comments in a user milieu but also what the tourist is keen to transmit and will have a repercussion. That is why we could call it the social or public perceived image, since if the tourist does not transmit certain impressions or experiences he or she has perceived, these will only have a reduced repercussion on the same tourist, however the social or public perceived image is of great utility for tourism research as it will be the one transmitted to and influencing other tourists. We do not just get an insight into their perceptions but also into how tourists construct, order and make meaning of their experiences (Bosangit et al. 2009), how they produce image internally that is then reflected externally.

But, moreover, web 2.0 and the social media do not just offer new possibilities to study the tourists’ social image but represent in themselves a change in the way tourist image is constructed through interaction and how tourists reproduce image or re-influence the image construction circle. As identified by Caton and Almeida (2008): “considerable attention has been devoted to the first half of this circle, focusing on the ways that destinations and hosts are represented in tourism media” (that is to say the influence of projected agents’ images over tourists’ images), but few studies have focused on the influence and feedback that perceived tourist images exert on projected ones, the image reproduction they exert, or in short, how perceived image becomes projected in the image construction circle.

As explained in previous chapters, we adapted the model of image formation to include the new online agents, and the user-to-user image transmission in an online User Milieu (see

figure 1.6). However, user-to-user communication is acquiring such importance and has such potential to impact other users' destination image formation that the distinction between projected and perceived images should be rethought, as well as the roles of the different agents.

Today, in the context of web 2.0 and User-Generated Content and social communication through the Internet, the double-sided nature of the tourist image formation circle and influence (projected image vs. perceived image) is changing substantially as users or tourists feed back into the image construction circle very strongly, on an unprecedented scale and at an unprecedented rate, by interacting with one another. Tourists become fundamental agents of transformation and image reproduction, proved by the potential reach of the travel blog and review entries and by the new dynamism tourist images have acquired. Tourist image has presented itself as an eminently dynamic construct, especially in the Internet and 2.0 communication era where the dimensions of time and space bend and speed up. Dynamism is increased and changes in image may occur more quickly and unpredictably.

Today, tourists increasingly reproduce their perceived images by transmitting them through the social media, and this change is fundamental to understanding tourist image construction nowadays. They actively reinforce and reproduce image. They reproduce and reinforce the stereotyped images to which they have been exposed by their actions at the destination and by posting this image online. Web 2.0 has the particularity of containing perceived and projected images at the same time.

Before, tourists could only transmit what they had perceived to a reduced circle of acquaintances through traditional word of mouth. Today, web 2.0 enables them to transmit and socially reproduce their images to the whole world. The agents transmitting image through web 2.0 can be the real friends and relatives of the reader, but more interestingly and new is the fact that many people that do not know one another get in touch through these social media for the first time. The very moment this image is posted online and someone else reads it, it becomes projected or transmitted image.

This transmission of tourist image from user to user, from tourist to tourist, which acts similarly to traditional word of mouth, is what is known as e-WOM. The information exchange creates a bond between reader and author which contributes to a sense of attachment (Wenger, 2008), it acts as informal peer-to-peer communication. The particularities of this new word-of-mouth are that it can be asynchronous, has the potential to reach thousands of people (Bickart & Schindler 2002 in Mack et al., 2008) and relate unknown people one to another. Indeed, this anonymous image transmitted to unknown readers is new and must be paid special attention.

This e-WOM created, transmitted and perceived in a user milieu is one that empowers consumers (Pan et al., 2007). The transmission of image is no longer unilateral from powerful agents such as tour-operators to the "powerless" tourists, but from the empowered tourists to other tourists though word-of-mouth or Word-of-mouse (Riedl et al., 2002), it becomes an ongoing dynamic process. The unlimited access to information through the Internet leads to that image projected by a blog being at the same level as journal or travel agency publicity, or even more as communication tends to be made more in a solely user milieu. It harnesses the power of the crowds, it empowers individuals and communities

by enabling them to create content themselves and to consume it themselves. It is the era of the “wisdom of crowds” (Surowiecki, 2004) or the “collective intelligence” (Stangl, 2010). This implies a radical change in the processes of diffusion, distribution and access to information (Tejedor, 2008) with the appearance of phenomena such as the so-called online viral effect or viral marketing. On these 2.0 sites, information is integrated innovatively, users are co-creators of knowledge (not passive receivers), distribution of information becomes horizontal and not hierarchic. Until now, the user had been mainly a receiver but is now converted into a sender and transmitter of image of the first order. Users add their own value to word (in Wunsch-Vincent, Vickery (2007). Indeed they have an intrinsic added value for other users.

According to Anderson (2008), the shift to web 2.0 and UGC conveys big ideas that will surely lead to big changes. The characteristics of web 2.0 make it unstoppable: 1. User-Generated Content, 2. harnesses the power of the crowds, 3. data shared is on an epic scale, 4. architecture of participation, 5. network effects, 6. openness. Web 2.0, including travel blogs and reviews, is based on the architecture of participation, and mass participation is facilitated (Anderson, 2008). Users become engaged and participate in this collective creation. Some say that a new social fabric is being built (O'Reilly, 2005). Moreover it is open. Anyone can enter, participate and access the information (this encourages people to rely on these sources even more).

However, the consumer-to-consumer relationship that blogs provide has been overlooked by researchers (Pan et al., 2007) as well as their vast possibilities for information transmission and user empowerment. No matter how representative bloggers are of the tourist public of a destination, their posts become the visible user-generated image of that place online, acting similarly to word-of-mouth communication, and therefore deserve an accurate study.

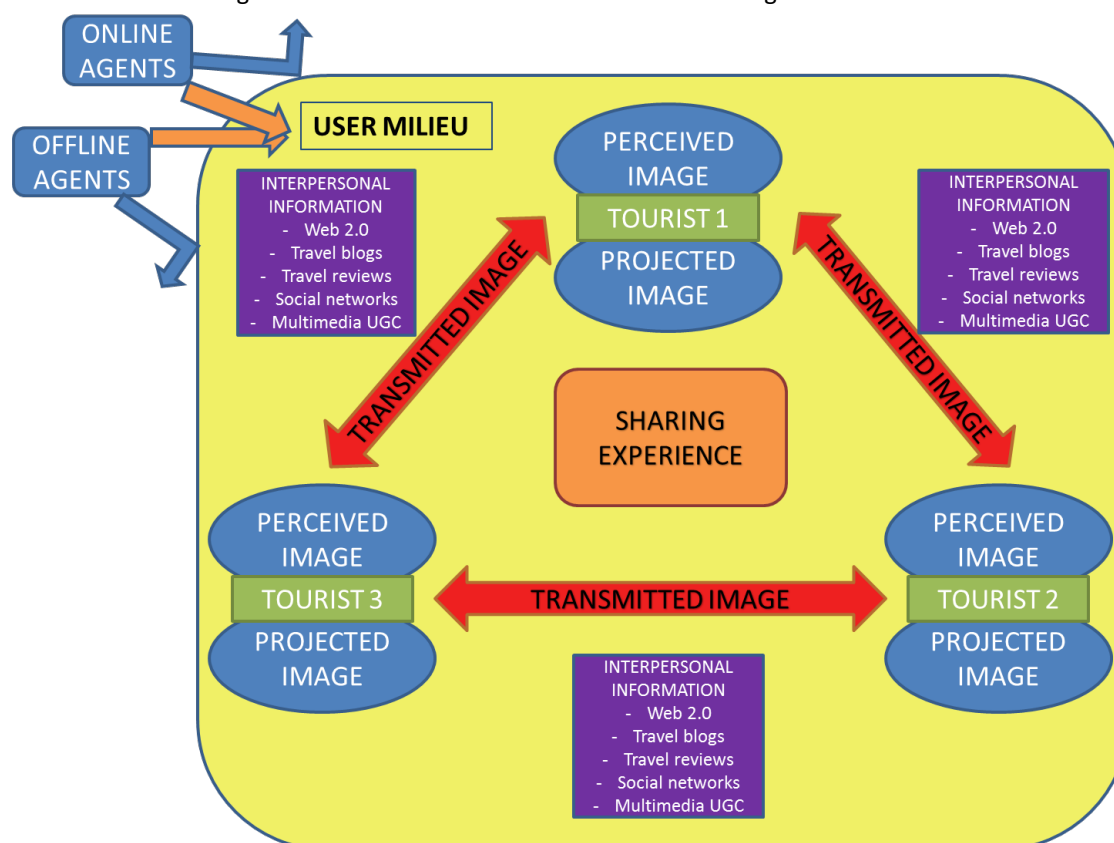
In the context of this user-generated image transmission and e-WOM, the nature of tourist image, which is a complex construct formed by the interaction of projected images by agents and perceived images by tourists as separate entities which influence one another, is changing. Projected tourist image is no longer a unilateral process from agents to tourists, but the tourists themselves project image, it being necessary to adopt the wider concept of transmitted image. Today, social interactions among users that were not possible before have been spurred on and have exploded with 2.0 online participation and user-to-user communication (Krizman & Belullo, 2007). Several things determine such fellow interactions and the images created (own experiences, previous images, the effect of several media and actors, the tourists' subjectivity and social interactions). According to the social interactionist perspective “the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows” (Almeida & Buzinde, 2007). In this sense the construction of tourists' image must be increasingly sought in the social media and web 2.0 interaction.

This increased user interaction results in the circle of image construction becoming increasingly close, and more closed, from the perceived image of users to the instantly projected-transmitted image of users; from the same point to the same point, completing the image “hermeneutic circle” exclusively within the social media. This closed loop becomes quicker and stronger with instant online communication and the social media. Perceived image becomes instantly transmitted image and this displaces the control over image of

other sources. And not only that, the social media have a privileged position in terms of popularity, visibility and ranking if compared to official tourism sites, at least that of Catalonia, and other types of media.

This leads to a revolution today in tourist image formation since through the “sharing experience”(González, 2010) or through the participation and sharing of images among tourists, the complex image circle is closed without moving from the same user to other users, tourists produce images and consume other tourists’ images. The hermeneutic circle seems to close upon the users increasingly. Users are engaged with tourist images through sharing with others, through comparing, through interacting with others, through transmitting image. If authors such as Gruber (2007) consider that web 2.0 contains the “collective intelligence” of people, we could say that to a certain point the content of travel blogs and reviews reflects the “collective image” of a destination.

Figure 4.1.
 New destination image construction framework with transmitted image



Source: Author

With User-Generated Content we should move from the previous models of image formation (such as in figure 1.6) to the model shown in figure 4.1 in which the user or the individual becomes central to image creation and transmission. The circle of image creation, perception and transmission is increasingly more closed in a solely user milieu, without the “disturbance” of other external agents or sources, and results in a collectively built image. Now, the whole image formation process can be done through the web 2.0 and a user milieu: from pre-trip image formation to perceived post-trip image transmission again and again. Tourists project certain images which reach other tourists. These tourists at some

point may feed back into the circle by posting their perceived images, which will instantly become projected, thus closing the circle. All the tourist process can be mediated by web 2.0 and what can be called the “shared experience”, which includes all phases of the tourist process: inspiration, planning, comparison, booking, the trip itself, and the sharing of it (González, 2010).

This massive sharing of tourist experiences among users is leading to the dilution of the projected vs. perceived image outline as the boundary between what is perceived image and what is projected, and especially who is doing what, is increasingly unclear. Therefore we should shift from a classical outline of the tourist image construction circle in which very defined offline types of agents project images directed at tourists, and tourists perceive those images in a passive way and feed back into the circle in a continuous mutual adaptation, to a model which reflects the new image formation dynamics occurring online with web 2.0 and the new concept of “transmitted image”. With User-Generated Content, the individual-anonymous user becomes a central and active part to image creation and transmission and this must be reflected in a new image formation model. The image circle is closed from tourist to tourist, tourists are at the same time perceivers and projectors of information who share their “transmitted images” with one another. Moreover, the new image transmission model reflects that image transmission occurs increasingly in a solely user milieu, in which users-tourists are central (both transmitting and perceiving image) and other agents or information sources become external and have a weaker capacity or more difficulties to penetrate and influence this online user milieu.

The completion of the image construction circle in the same travel blogs and reviews, or the social media in general, added to the fact that the whole image construction is made increasingly in a solely user milieu, leads us to the conclusion that the spin turns on to itself from user to user, and this, added to other factors, explains that official tourist image is not reaching the tourists very strongly as other types of image-projecting agents become progressively excluded from the construction image circle. Travel blogs and reviews embody the social reproduction of certain images by tourists that feed back into the hermeneutic circle through transmitted image.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1. Contribution of the findings to theory and discussion

Tourist image has proved to be a complex, dynamic construct involving not just the image in the minds of tourists but both the projected and the perceived images of a destination by the different actors, including the image transmitted by the tourists themselves. This research shows the importance of taking into consideration these different images and their producers. The tourist image construct should be regarded as complex, multiple, relativistic and dynamic in nature (Gallarza et al., 2002). Such characteristics of the tourist image construct were seen in the case of Catalonia in which complex identity issues, complex images in terms of their content and relationships were reflected. Tourist image is complex and multiple in terms of the identities it conveys (contents) and diverse and dynamic in its spatial and temporal distribution. Images from one same place have proved to be very different from one another and their elements multiple, as shown by the content analysis based on several categories related to geography, cultural identity, attraction factors and feelings and attributes. It is also relativistic or subjective as it depends on the different tourists, their previous experiences and expectations, as well as on the agents intervening and their intentionality. As the constructivist approach assumes, multiple realities exist as reflected in the tourist image construct.

5.1.1. General contributions

This research supports the intersubjectivity of destination images and the shared character of experiences and meanings mentioned by Shields (1991). We observe how, through the sum of multiple individual stories and fragmented subjective images, shared experiences and meanings can be extracted and general conclusions can be drawn about the image of a destination in general and for specific social groups. The larger the sample of images analysed, the better they reflect this overall image of a destination, at least among the population studied. "As different producers and audiences are involved, meanings are differently created, encoded, communicated, interpreted, decoded, and again communicated over time and diverse contexts" (Atlejevic & Doorne, 2002). Today, these meanings are increasingly created and communicated through user-to-user interaction, from peer to peer in online web 2.0 spaces. In the case of blogs and reviews, encoding and communication is similar among them, similar patterns occur. Likewise, interpretation and decoding, although dependent on each person, probably have similarities among people in the same travel blog or review community. In this virtual context, the re-communication or transmission of tourist image becomes instant and the tourist image construct is constantly built.

Besides, in the line of Almeida and Bunzinde (2007), this research contributes to supporting the view that tourist image identity concerns both the cultural identity and the attribute-based identity of a destination (all elements that identify it) and that it must be regarded as a constructed identity, as the values, symbols, feelings, characteristics and elements by which a destination is recognized or known that are transmitted within image, and not as an essentialist identity of the place. Therefore, through the study of tourist images, the

identities ascribed to places and the roles played by the different agents in the construction of the destination identity can be harnessed.

In this respect, the analysis of image and identity through several image components was inspired by previous research on the cognitive (hard associations, which refer to the tangible and functional attributes), affective (soft associations, which refer to emotional attributes), behavioural (or conative), and spatial (giving certain attributes and cognitive, affective and conative images to destinations and is related to the visibility or invisibility of places in perception) components. Among these components, the cognitive, affective and spatial components were studied. As Mackay and Fesenmaier (1997) ascertained, differences in meaning, number and importance of dimensions occur. Differences occur among different agents, among different users and different regions. "Both attention to, and exclusion of, certain destination attributes or symbols can play a part in how destination promotions are perceived" (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997). This research analysed and obtained an approximation to the image identity of the destination by analysing several components and elements, its attraction factors, feelings and attributes, geographical component and cultural identity. Indeed, already from the very first approach to both projected and perceived images on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews we observed that the components of image were represented in the geography, attraction factors, cultural identity, feelings and attributes of the destination, as all these elements were present among the more frequent contents.

Moreover, in relation to the first hypothesis, we observe what could be called the *leitmotiv* of this research: significant dissonances exist in the destination image of the region and subregions studied between official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews. In this respect, this research enlarges the corpus of studies analysing the issue of tourist image dissonance or congruency (Cohen, 1993; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Bandyopahyay & Morais, 2005; Xiang et al., 2008, among others). Such "representative dissonance" (Bandyopahyay & Morais, 2005) both between the images that agents project and the reality of the place and between the different agents' and the tourists' images is important for the effects and influence it may have on the construction and transformation of the actual reality of the destination, both at symbolic and physical levels, and specifically for the effects it may have on the dilution or enhancement of local identities. We shed light on the issue of the differential ways in which destinations are represented depending on whether these representations are internal (coming from the same destination) or external (as represented by foreign agents or tourists). We confirm that the perceived image of the destination, as represented in travel blogs and reviews, does not correspond to the projected image, as represented on official tourism websites, indicating that several image gaps, dissonance or lack of image congruency exist in some fundamental aspects. Important differences were found at the levels of attribute-based identity (attraction factors, feelings and opposite attributes), cultural identity, and spatial distribution of image.

The nature of this image dissonance and congruency between projected and perceived images of a destination was analysed by focusing on an online environment in which we targeted the perceived-transmitted images of tourists as expressed in web 2.0 (travel blogs and reviews) and the official tourist image (official tourism websites). Results show that multiple representations of the same destination, not being congruent to one another, exist

and coexist in an online environment. Image struggles were clearly identified between the destination-produced images and the tourists-users' generated images. These image struggles now occur among agents and tourists thousands of kilometres apart who would not have coincided in an offline context.

As Anton (2010) points out, different attractions or elements have a different capacity to penetrate into the tourists' image of the destination. Some nodes are hierarchically at the front-door and are well positioned for several reasons and therefore have no trouble reaching tourists. However, other attractions that may convey also valuable elements of identity are not so strongly present within image and thus need an appropriate presentation to become part of visitor imagery and hence attract tourism (Anton, 2010).

The attribute-based identity or characteristics of the destination, the general represented elements, attraction factors, feelings and attributes which identify it and distinguish it from others are a fundamental part of tourist image content. The main **attraction factors** of a destination present in tourist image, which render it attractive to visitors and make it prone to visit, are usually related to specific modes of travel and tourism. The most essential elements or front-nodes mentioned and their specificity were very dissonant between tourists' images and official images, both at regional and subregional levels. Although, for example, the most mentioned attraction factor was tangible heritage in both cases, the specific elements mentioned were very different; very prominent or popular elements mentioned by users (especially the Gaudí subject) proved not to stand out at all from other elements on official tourism websites. By contrast, official tourism websites promoted heritage of all types and for all brand regions. The essential elements tourists mention (heritage sites, towns, urban environment, etc.) are stronger and more prominent than in the case of official tourism websites where not so strong essential elements are found and are more general/generic. In the case of tourists, we can see how they selectively gather essential and very specific information from huge amounts of data about a place, as Agustines (2009) mentions. Major dissonances also occur in the image of sub-regional brands which shows that tourists may be putting in value or may be attracted to the destinations because of certain specific elements that are hardly promoted by official tourism websites or that are very different. As well as in the case of Catalonia in general, for each of the brands, tourists pick up some must-see or specific elements to represent them.

Apart from the tangible heritage of the destination, tourists were found to feel attracted to the destination by its urban environment (related to the major urban tourist hub of Catalonia: Barcelona) and to elements related to this environment (food and wine and leisure and recreation). However, official images emphasized other attraction factors related to different territories and varied tourist modes: nature and landscape, sun, sea and sand, the urban environment, leisure and recreation and sports. Surprisingly, attraction factors such as sun, sea and sand and nature and landscape were for bloggers some of the least promoted categories, probably indicating that the "urban-heritage"-related tourist is the one more prone to writing blogs and reviews. Remarkably, intangible heritage was the least present attraction factor in both travel blogs and reviews and on official tourism websites. We observed that notable relationships were found between specific attraction factors in both types of images: tangible heritage-urban environment, or tangible heritage-nature and active tourism or –sun, sea and sand, which are correlated and jointly mentioned or experienced in both types of texts. Remarkably, in the case of travel blogs and reviews,

however, correlations are much less strong and irregular. In general, correlations were stronger on official tourism websites, showing a more solid structure of texts, while the bloggers' and reviewers' ones are not so well connected. Regarding the attraction factors promoted we observed that official websites promote general heritage or beaches, elements that can be found in many tourist destinations, and not unique intangible and tangible heritage elements, at least among the most mentioned concepts.

Bloggers and reviewers use more attribute-based words and concepts, while official tourism websites show a more "holistic" image of the destinations, more centred on general descriptions. Tourists in general use more **feelings and attributes** to describe their experiences. The most prominent feelings and attributes of the destination are positive and mostly coincident. However, travel bloggers and reviewers also use bad feelings and negative attributes on some occasions, while official tourism websites almost never do. In general, bloggers most strongly associate the most touristy brands to negative attributes than other brands. For example, the authenticity vs. inauthenticity dichotomy or the unsafety issue are much more mentioned or aroused by tourists, the latter especially in the most touristy regions, meaning tourists are sensitive to those subjects. The presence of also some negative feelings and attributes in the case of tourists indicate they both describe the good and the bad things of a destination without worries, as their descriptions are more polarized into good and bad feelings, supporting the view of Burgess et al. (2009) who said that consumers with extreme experiences (very positive or negative) are more keen to post about them than official tourism websites which use almost exclusively good feelings and are more neutral and devoid of criticism in their descriptions (this "positiveness" of official sites was also identified by Huertas & Fernández-Cavia, 2009). Dann (1996) explains tourists' feed back into the discourse by constructing images and systems of expectations and evaluation of the matching of expectations and reality and in this case tourists complain if they are not satisfied and become destination promoters if they are satisfied. In this respect the discourse of tourists better reflects "real experiences", in which not always positive things may happen, and may be more credible. The discourse of tourism (Dann 1996) and the language of recreation were clearly identified both on official tourism websites and in travel blogs and reviews. Themes such as romanticism, love, heliocentrism, sea, sex, fun, etc. were very common, and "fun" was especially present in the case of blogs and reviews.

This research contributes to the study of a complex territory in terms of **cultural identity** and to the study of the different identity image super-positions coexisting and the roles both tourists and official organizations may be exerting on it. As shown in the results, cultural identity image can be very dissonant between official websites and tourists' images online with the implications this may have for the local societies and for the enhancement or dilution of local cultures. Our case study shows that while tourists have a more global cultural identity in mind based on nation-states, official websites reflect more a local identity on a smaller regional scale. We also contribute to showing that the image transmitted by tourists is highly based on stereotypes, especially in terms of cultural identity. Tourists' views are extremely fragmented and partial, they reflect very specific and repetitive elements (attraction factors, feelings, etc.). Stereotypes have been seen as difficult to change, in spite of the efforts made by the official image.

The **spatial distribution** of image throughout the different destinations and regions differed greatly from official tourist image to that expressed and transmitted by tourists online.

Official tourist image was more balanced or homogeneously spread among regions, and plenty of elements and destinations were described for each territory. Minor tourist regions in terms of real tourist numbers were even found to have more promotion than the major tourist hubs. Conversely, in the case of user-generated image, regions with more tourists got more posts, but exaggeratedly, so that posts were concentrated more than proportionally in the most touristic regions. Moreover, the brand territories were mainly described by a few specific elements or places repeated in the majority of blogs. This proved the great geographical imbalance or disproportion and specialization of image transmission of the different sub-regional brand territories. In the case of Catalonia, Barcelona brand territory stood out by far from the rest and was given greater importance.

Spatial indexes applied to the regional distribution of tourists' image served better to see the specialization, particularities or what renders unique each brand region relative to the other brands and to the whole territory under study, than the measures with absolute numbers, where Barcelona eclipsed all other results. In general the image and specializations obtained seemed coherent with the brands' physical characteristics and elements. Attraction factors such as nature and active tourism and sun, sea and sand were mostly located in brands which have important nature areas or have coastal areas. The urban environment was more located in the brand containing the capital city of the region and the tangible heritage attraction factor was the most equally spread among all the brands showing that it is a fundamental part of the brands' image, of the whole region's image, and is probably highly present in bloggers' and reviewers' image in general (further studies should research this point).

The spatial component of image gives certain attributes, cognitive, affective and conative images to destinations and is related to the visibility or invisibility of places in perception. Perception, especially in tourism, is spatially organized (Golledge & Stimson, 1997). It is this spatial image which directs tourists to their objectives and can act as an organizer of activity (Lynch, 1960). We clearly observe that tourists coincide in the places they perceive and give importance to. As Lynch (1960) assessed, spatial image is collectively shared and coincidences occur with members of the same socio-cultural groups.

In geographic terms, official tourism websites show strong relationships between neighbouring brands or brands that used to belong to the same brand, in a coherent territorial way. However, bloggers and reviewers do not seem to correlate brands with one another in a significant way.

As a general characteristic of the studied images, in relation to their constituent elements (attraction factors, feelings and attributes and geographic and cultural identity references), tourists' images are much more concentrated on certain prominent image elements and destinations (or spaces) whereas official images give a more global vision or a more diverse vision that encompasses in a balanced way the different elements and territories. This may be due to the fact that official tourism websites intend to be politically correct by promoting the different attraction factors of the different territories in a balanced way and give an all-encompassing view of the destination. In relation to that, the nature of the words employed by travel bloggers and reviewers and by official tourism websites is different. In general, official tourism websites are informative and descriptive in nature, while travel blogs and reviews reflect travel histories full of experiences (reflecting more circumstantial or functional day-to-day elements), far more feelings and opinions, etc. Although images are

subjective and diverse, travel blog and review images are much more similar to each other than to official tourism images.

Concerning the second hypothesis, we confirm that with the creation of user-generated content, the image perceived by tourists becomes instantly a transmitted image when tourists describe their experiences online and others read it, in web 2.0 spaces such as travel blogs and reviews. Due to the increasing popularity and capacity of influence of the social media the circle of image formation is increasingly taking place in a solely user milieu. With Internet user-to-user communication and UGC, due to its importance and implications the tourist image construct projected vs. perceived outline must be rethought and widened to include and emphasize the concept of the image transmitted by tourists (which is at the same time a perceived-projected image of tourists).

Today, Internet communication plays a dominant role (Govers et al., 2007) and has become the main channel for seeking and disseminating information (Lin and Huang, 2006). There is no doubt that tourists are increasingly relying on Internet sources for tourism and travel information search, as several studies demonstrate (Govers and Go, 2003; González, 2010; Krizman & Belullo, 2007; Cox et al., 2008a,b, etc.). In terms of tourism, the effect of online communication is great because of the information-based nature of tourism products (Krizman & Belullo, 2007).

This research responds to the claim made by Govers and Go (2003) and provides a model in which Gartner's (1993) image-projecting agents were adapted to the online environment, especially emphasizing the new online agents and the role of anonymous users as image transmitting agents through web 2.0 and the image construction circle. In this adaptation of Gartner's classification, official tourism websites are among the least trustworthy sources for the tourists, and travel blogs and reviews would be highly credible as they are similar to friends and relatives' recommendations.

The potential to influence of user-generated contents and the social media is growing every day due to the increasing creation of contents, their acceptance, trustworthiness, the capacity of meeting tourists' needs and interests, and the many advantages they present for users. Time and space constraints related to tourist image transmission dilute or disappear with web 2.0. The repercussion these images may have on other tourists can be great as tourists explain "actual experiences" (not commercially prepared) (Lin & Huang, 2006) and provide evaluation, feedback and recommendations to peers (Bosangit et al., 2009). We contribute to visualizing the implications of the difference in intentionality behind user-generated images online (social relationship, self-expression, social recognition, leisure, etc.) and the other agents' images (usually economic or political) which renders user-generated image so credible in the eyes of other users. These UGC images, with no economic or political interest *a priori*, are the ones which are increasingly created and consulted by other users or peers to the tourist.

Now, pre-trip promotion is no longer dominated by outsiders (tour operators) (Dann, 1996) but by users. Information available now for the user through e-WOM is much vaster than that available through traditional WOM or many other sources. These images from fellow travellers, previous to the tourist experience itself, become really handy and valuable information for the future tourists during the planning phase. UGC is especially influential on users familiarized with web 2.0, digital natives, independent travellers and users who create

contents themselves, becoming especially engaged in the process. With the generalization of the use of 2.0 devices and the social media, this influence will become major for a growing public.

We maintain that a change in the power of the different agents and actors in the image constructing circle may be occurring. The great image dissonance found in the image circle between user-generated images and tourists' images should now be seen in a context where DMOs (and traditional agents in general) are probably having less and less control over destination image. Image dissonance may be increasingly greater as UGC use becomes general. Local authorities and promoters, on the one side are losing ground in image control as a multiplicity of images are constantly created and transmitted through the net, with various authors and purposes, which may be created by users who are probably more credible than official propaganda.

From an interactionist vantage point the construction of tourists' image must be increasingly sought in the social media and web 2.0 intense interaction. In this respect, "meanings" (Atlejevic & Doorne, 2002) are increasingly created and communicated from user to user. In this case, encoding and communication are similar among bloggers or users, similar patterns occur, and probably interpretation and decoding, are also similar among the different groups of internet users. This increased user interaction results in the circle of image construction becoming increasingly close, and more closed, from the perceived image of users to the actual projected image of users which is instantly transmitted, at all stages of the trip. This closed loop becomes quicker and stronger with instant online communication and the social media. This leads to a revolution today in tourist image formation as through the "sharing experience" (González, 2010), through the participation and interaction of users-tourists, the "hermeneutic circle" of the destination image is increasingly completed in a solely user milieu, with a weaker interference of other external sources, becoming an image built collectively by tourists. Through web 2.0 and travel blogs we observe the empowerment of users. Furthermore, the social media have proved to have a privileged position in terms of popularity, visibility and ranking if compared to official tourism sites, at least those of Catalonia, and other types of media.

This massive sharing of tourist experiences among users is leading to the dilution of the projected vs. perceived image outline as the boundary between what is perceived image and what is transmitted and especially who is doing what is increasingly unclear. Therefore, we should shift from a classical outline of the tourist image construction circle in a which very defined offline agents project images directed at tourists, and tourists perceive those images in a passive way and feed back into the circle in a continuous mutual adaptation, to a model which reflects the new image formation dynamics occurring online with web 2.0 and the new concept of "transmitted image", as shown in Figure 4.1. With User-Generated-Content the individual-anonymous user becomes a central and active part of image creation and transmission and this must be reflected in a new image formation model. The image circle is closed from tourist to tourist, tourists are at the same time perceivers and projectors of information who share their "transmitted images" with one another. Moreover, the new image transmission model reflects that image transmission occurs increasingly in a solely user milieu, in which users-tourists are central (both transmitting and perceiving image) and other agents or information sources become external to it and have a weaker capacity to penetrate and influence this user milieu.

This transmitted image created and consumed by users has been found to have some particularities and implications. As identified in Dann and Liebman-Parrinello (2009), research widely supports that 2.0 communication is heavily dominated by English (this is because no significant travel blog and review websites were found (with more than 100 entries about Catalonia) whose main language was not English and, within these websites, the great majority of blogs and reviews were written in English. Despite the fact that the majority of tourists coming to Catalonia are French speakers (26%), and that English speakers in total account for less than a 20% of the tourist public coming to Catalonia, in the case of travel blogs and reviews tourists from English speaking countries and entries written in English (94%) clearly dominate. The rest of languages (including French, German, Spanish and Catalan) are hardly present in the studied travel blog and review entries.

Furthermore, the “credible” online user-generated image has been found to be written in most cases by people who reside a great distance from the destination. These people residing in distant countries are the most likely to write about it and have a distorted, idyllic, or at least stereotyped image of the destination. For long-distance tourists, probably cultural identity issues on a country without state will not be well-known with the effects this may have on the local culture and identity. The farther away the destination, the more likely the image is favourable (Crompton, 1979) and the more stereotyped as an imagined world (Appadurai, 1990 in Hugues, 1995). These representations created by bloggers from distant countries have a greater potential to influence the image construction of members of their same culture. In this case study it was the tourists from very distant countries who wrote the most about Catalonia. In this matter, we contributed to enlarge the corpus of literature by identifying the bloggers’ countries of origin. The top countries of origin for bloggers writing about Catalonia are the US, the UK, Canada and Australia, all Anglo-Saxon countries. Three of them are distant countries outside Europe.

Once at this point the contradiction arises: although it is suggested that the farther the home residence of the tourist the more vague, idealized, distorted and stereotyped the image of him/her will be, it actually is the people who reside farther away from the destination the ones who are more keen to write about it in travel blogs or online social media. Moreover, the extreme specialization of image of most tourists leads to fragmented or partial images and to images that can be quickly changed by other images, and destination image may become more unstable. This shows the implications a strongly stereotyped user transmitted image may have for identity contested places such as Catalonia.

Furthermore, we ascertain that the user-generated image online (such as in travel blogs and reviews) has a greater capacity or potential to disseminate image than the official destination image (such as on official tourism websites). We have found that the potential of image dissemination of travel blogs and reviews is greater than that of official tourism websites in the case of Catalonia (other studies should determine if this happens in other destinations too). User-Generated Content sites usually have a very good image dissemination and are search-engine friendly. Results show that travel blogs and reviews have much greater visibility (higher number of indexed pages, more presence in the social media, more incoming links). In the case of link-based ranks, only Spain’s (Spain.info) and Catalonia’s (GenCat.cat) official websites (which contain other information apart from tourist information) were positioned similarly to travel blog and review entries, and the sub-

regional official websites were worse positioned. Regarding usage measures such as popularity, we have observed that the traffic travel blog and review hosting websites have is superior to that of official tourism websites in general. Regarding the country of origin of the audience, the international projection of travel blog and review websites is much greater than that of official tourism websites, and therefore the information about Catalonia they contain has the potential to reach a broader audience. Therefore, in terms of visits to websites, travel blog and review websites in general receive more visits and are thus more used than official tourism websites. In terms of size too, the amount of data about the destination of study found on the travel blog and review hosting websites was greater than that present on official tourism websites, demonstrating that data on web 2.0 are shared on an epic scale.

5.1.2. Main contributions concerning the case study

This research contributes to reinterpreting the tourist image and identity of Catalonia from the point of view of those who look at us, and to seeing how this perspective differs from the local or official destinations' view. Such analysis is of major interest in destinations such as Catalonia where different images and identity backgrounds are superposed, and could foster debate on the destination itself. The four characteristics of image mentioned by Gallarza et al. (2002) apply to Catalonia. Tourist image of Catalonia is complex (reflecting complex identity issues, complex images in terms of their content and relationships), relativistic, as each blogger or reviewer has a different image of the destination, multiple, as images from a same place have proved to be very different in their contents, dynamic in geographical terms, as images of the different sub-territories vary greatly, and also probably in temporal terms (as future research should determine).

Preliminary results already showed the presence of the different constituent elements and gave important clues in order to understand the image of Catalonia. Although the most frequent word of all was for both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews "Barcelona", this element was relatively much more important in the case of tourists; five times more frequent than the second word, and with a very great weight.

In the eyes of the tourists who see us, on the level of spatial perception or identity reference, the image of Catalonia is that of Barcelona, the most frequent word of all. We observe that the regional tourist brand of Catalonia was not visualized as such, as a united major umbrella brand with different territorial minor brands all linked under it. Both references to Barcelona and Spain are mentioned predominantly while Catalonia appears in a secondary position. This brand is extremely present and central in travel blogs and reviews accounting for more than 4 out of 5 entries about Catalonia, much more than would be expected in proportion to Catalonia's share of incoming tourists (about 2/5). Moreover, in travel blogs and reviews, the brands nearer to Barcelona gain more prominent online places in relation to other brands with a more real tourist share. Apart from Barcelona itself, within Catalonia the rest of the sub-regional brands were much less mentioned by name and some were unmentioned (or unknown?) by tourists. Only Costa Brava and Costa Daurada had some kind of recognition.

In contrast, official tourism websites promote Costa Brava the most, and the rest of the brands in a more or less balanced way, which does not correspond to the brands' real incoming tourists. They mention the brands' names quite often.

The most prominent elements of Catalonia's image with a major capacity of penetration according to bloggers and reviewers were Barcelona city, Gaudí (Sagrada Família, Casa Batlló, Parc Güell), Spanish identity and good feelings; outstanding elements mentioned were also the Rambles and places such as Girona and Montserrat. These elements mostly differ from the most outstanding elements mentioned by official tourism websites which were Barcelona, the Catalan identity, Girona and several generic words such as routes, tourist offices, towns, museums and art styles. Besides, in the case of Catalonia, elements that did not have high penetration capacity in bloggers' and reviewers' images were, among others, the autochthonous intangible heritage, some tangible heritage elements and Catalan identity elements, in part because of the well-established Spanish myth.

If the tourists' image of Catalonia is Barcelona, Barcelona's is Gaudí. The most outstanding aspect shown by results is the predominant importance of Gaudí and his masterpieces, especially the Sagrada Família (the second most frequent word of all, just after Barcelona), within bloggers' and reviewers' accounts, which are by all means the most prominent symbols of Catalonia. The tourists' image of Catalonia is strongly bound to the Barcelona + Gaudí binomial. In this sense, these two elements can be considered the "must sees" of Catalonia, according to the perspective of those who see and perceive us. The outstanding presence of Gaudí in the perceived-transmitted image represented the greatest dissonance with the official tourism image, because Gaudí and his masterpieces have only a secondary presence on official websites.

Apart from Gaudí and tangible heritage-related subjects (buildings and architecture, religious heritage and art), Barcelona was associated by tourists with urban environment (Ramblas, Metro, Market and Gothic Quarter, shopping), food and wine (tapas, paella, wine), leisure (nightlife, theme parks, cultural leisure) and had a strong specialization in sports (FC Barcelona, Camp Nou and Olympic Games and events). Remarkably the first intangible heritage element with which it is related is "flamenco".

This spatial disproportion and specialization in Barcelona could indicate that the tourists coming from very distant countries, with tight schedules, that come to Catalonia and write posts, mainly visit Barcelona, its top attractions, and its surrounding areas (Costa Barcelona, with Sitges, and Catalunya Central, with Montserrat), and the famous Costa Brava with the Dalí Museum and Girona, and little more. All these brands are close to the capital and usually day-trips to them are organized. Barcelona was found to be a very "legible" city and to have an "effective image" according to Lynch's (1960) denomination, as the bloggers and reviewers perceive very specific parts of it, very clear elements easily identified and found (Gaudí, Ramblas, etc.).

Apart from that, even when the other brands appear, bloggers focus on very specific elements of them too. Catalunya Central's image was mostly related to Montserrat, nature, active tourism and religious heritage. Costa Barcelona was most specialized in sun, sea and sand (beaches) and nightlife, in the cava/wine elements of the Penedès region, and was the most specialized brand in intangible heritage related to Sitges Carnival. Costa Brava was related to tangible heritage and artists (Dalí Museum), to heritage and the urban environment of Girona town and to the archaeological site of Empúries. In relative terms it specialized in sun, sea and sand and is seen as having the most diversified elements. Costa Daurada especially stands out for being strongly specialized in leisure and recreation, specifically in theme parks: PortAventura; it was also associated with tangible heritage

(Roman archaeological sites in the Tarragona area), to sun, sea and sand and nightlife. Remarkably the first intangible heritage element with which it was related are Castellers, or human towers. Pynerees was associated with religious heritage and the medieval period (Romanesque churches) and was most specialized in nature and active tourism (national park: Aiguestortes and rural landscape). Terres de l'Ebre was associated with tangible heritage (castles, churches and buildings) and with nature and active tourism (Ebre Delta nature Park). Terres de Lleida was the brand most strongly identified with tangible heritage, especially religious. It was also related to food and wine and to nature and active tourism. All in all, this concentrated view may have strong implications for the perception of Catalonia, tourist products and diversification of tourist flows into different spaces in a context in which UGC is increasingly influent.

Tourists showed an eminently positive view of Catalonia, which coincides with the view of the official websites. Both described Catalonia as beautiful, fun/interesting, at the same time as old (ancient) and new or fashionable, authentic, and related to love and relax(ation). Official tourism websites differed from travel blogs and reviews in that they described Catalonia as being quiet, lively and pleasant, whilst travel blogs and reviews gave more emphasis to the fact that places and attractions were full, cheap and noisy (these last three with a possible negative connotation). Bloggers and reviewers were much more sensitive to mentioning prices (both expensive and cheap) and in the case of the most touristy brands (Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada) the issue of unsafety arose (pickpocketing, mainly). The general use of positive adjectives by bloggers could indicate their satisfaction with the tourist experience in Catalonia.

In terms of cultural identity reference, a major dissonance was observed: while official tourism websites made reference to Catalan identity (three times more than Spanish identity), tourists contrastingly had Spanish identity as their main cultural, linguistic and geographical identity reference (three times more than Catalan) implying that tourists' images, in travel blogs and reviews, clash and struggle with official images in this subject. Moreover, among the official files Catalan identity is not uniformly spread (this may present difficulties for its transmission), while the Spanish state identity reference was well spread among bloggers' entries.

The fact that tourists mentioned Spanish cultural identity more, in a very stereotyped way, could be explained because bloggers travelling from overseas (which are the majority) may not have accurate information about the cultural minorities and nations without state in Europe, and hence take the whole of Spain and stereotyped elements as a reference. In addition to this, the Spanish cultural identity image is greatly consolidated on an international level. We also observed that the most touristy brands are the ones most strongly related by tourists to Spanish identity and the least touristy are the ones most related to Catalan identity.

Intangible heritage (traditions and cultural events, folklore, dances and music) is probably the part of culture which best represents cultural identity. However, intangible cultural elements were very weakly promoted by both official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews (in similar percentages). Neither official sites, nor blogs and reviews seemed to consider the intangible culture of Catalonia as an important element, and this may have huge implications for destinations which may define their identity based on their external representation. In general, Catalan-specific celebrations and events with a very specific

Catalan cultural identity were more mentioned by official sites, while internationally popular traditions, with a more global identity, were more mentioned by blogs and reviews.

Although specific Catalan cultural identity elements (castellers, giants and dwarfs, sardana) and traditional Catalan food and drinks were mentioned to some extent by bloggers and reviewers, the folkloric and culinary elements that they mention the most are those related to Spanish stereotyped cultural identity such as “flamenco”, “bullfighting” and “siesta”, “tapas and paella”, “sangria”, and even international elements (such as Carnival or fast food), which do not have their origin in Catalonia. For example, the Catalan sardana dance is mentioned six times less by tourists than flamenco. However, Catalan official tourism websites, despite mentioning the sardana, mention flamenco almost as frequently. Cava and wine were importantly mentioned by bloggers while Catalan traditional dishes were hardly mentioned.

The Barcelona brand was the one most related to the intangible elements of the Spanish myth in travel blogs and reviews. Catalan-specific traditions were much less dense in this brand. Remarkably, brands such as Costa Daurada and Terres de Lleida had as their main intangible elements “castellers”, “fireworks” and “giants and dwarfs”, all Catalan-specific or well-rooted traditions, but their presence was scarce. We observed that it is in the most touristy brands, and those most present in tourists tales (Barcelona and Costa Brava), that Spanish identity is strongest.

Although the Catalan language is probably the most fundamental sign of Catalan cultural identity, its scarce presence and the way it was presented show that bloggers and reviewers may have a biased, indifferent, or even negative view about it. They did not perceive it as a feature or as an attraction factor to the destination. Moreover, the presence of the Catalan language on official tourism websites was scarce too, and very poorly explained. Some pages, exceptionally, explain it slightly more extensively but the vast majority did not. Furthermore, although elements such as Gaudí buildings were greatly appreciated and could convey a strong Catalan identity, the scarce presence of this identity reference indicated that tourists do not associate them very strongly with Catalan identity.

In a complex identity destination such as Catalonia, this research confirms the existing identity conflict or struggle among the analysed images which can be summarized in that bloggers mention and value Spanish cultural identity much more and scarcely mention the Catalan intangible identity elements, while official sites seem to promote Catalan identity more.

The Spanish myth, embodied in a mostly Andalusian cultural identity, explained by Poutet (1995), Fernández (2007) and Galí Espelt (2002), is fully present in tourists’ accounts (“sunny Spain” the 3S and the 3Ds, flamenco and bullfighting, sangría, paella and tapas). The Spanish stereotyped image present in travel blogs and reviews potentially exerts a negative role on Catalan autochthonous identity and contributes to assimilating it to a Spanish identity, erasing or hiding differences, diversity and autochthonous cultural minorities within the Spanish state such as the Catalan minority when they transmit their views online. Tourists do not value Catalan identity as much as Spanish identity and also reflect more global identities. Although it could be assumed that tourist image cannot exist without stereotypification of some kind, if at least in this case they were Catalan identity stereotypes they would reflect parts of the local culture, but because they reflect the Spanish ones they are reflecting a

cultural identity which is not autochthonous to the area, with possible effects on the local culture.

In terms of the promotion of Catalan identity, the role played by official sites' image is positive and enhances the local (Catalan) identity reference. However, the effect of official images on tourists' images (pre-visit) and the performance of the destination itself (*in situ*) are insufficient at the moment to change the well-established stereotyped image of Spain in the eyes of tourists. We may have identified that Catalonia has a relatively poor brand performance (online, *in situ*, etc.) in terms of identity, at least as reflected in tourists' accounts. It seems experiences *in situ* do not make the tourists perceive Catalonia as a representative or vertebrating brand of the Catalan tourist destinations, and relative to Spanish image, the actual experience does not change the Spanish geographical reference and stereotyped image. The brand that works for Catalonia is actually Barcelona, as a tourist hub, and the tourist brand of Spain in terms of cultural identity.

If official tourism websites are reflecting the image closest to the population's will, in the case of Catalonia the will of the population is not so strongly disseminated online as the tourists' image. Image dissemination was disproportionate, especially if we take the sub-regional brands' websites (except for Barcelona) as a reference. TripAdvisor.com was the website hosting travel blogs and reviews with a major image dissemination. Moreover, in the case of official tourism websites we observed that the better or worse positioning of the specific brand websites did not depend on the fact that the brand had more or less real incoming tourists (for example BarcelonaTurisme.com is not one of the most visible). Hence, it seems that the influence of official tourism websites on tourist bloggers was minimal in the case of Catalonia. In general, if a destination or brand is not present in this UGC user milieu, this implies "total invisibility to potential tourists who are going through the inspiration, research and planning phases of their next trip" (González, 2010).

In the case of Catalonia, we have corroborated that blogs about Catalonia have expanded. However, this growing creation of travel blogs about it is not linear or uniform as some websites had a decreasing number of entries and especially TripAdvisor.com had a very high growth of entry creation concerning Catalonia. We have identified that review sites (containing blog-like entries) were growing quicker and probably TripAdvisor.com leads this tendency. In terms of size, Catalonia, or more accurately destinations within it, were well represented among the different tourist destinations in travel blog and review websites.

5.2. Utility and benefits of the methodology

The method presented has accomplished its main goals which were to build a broad methodological framework that could be used for other studies whose target was different destinations and different types of online media and tourist websites (not just official tourism websites and travel blogs and reviews).

The methodology following the logical research process used here is useful for any similar research. It starts with a research design section, then the method to obtain the database followed by the presentation of the method of analysis and finally the specific measures obtained, from the most general to the most specific, first comparing both official tourism

image and travel blog and review image and then looking more deeply into the travel blog and review image for the different territories.

Selecting the relevant data sources for the case study (establishing a criterion for selecting certain websites and not others) was another contribution of this research. It is most important to justify why some websites were taken and why others were not, under certain criteria, to make the research sources as relevant as possible to assess the relevance and implications of the subsequent results. Specifically regarding travel blogs and reviews, this research contributes to filling a major gap in the literature, which is that studies do not usually provide objective procedures to choose the most relevant travel blogs and reviews for the study of a specific case study. This study provides an objective method which targeted blogs and reviews located in specialized travel blog and review hosting websites with their advantages for information gathering, and assessed, objectively, which were the most relevant websites hosting travel blogs and reviews to be chosen for the specific case of study. This process consisted of browsing former works, bibliographical sources, subject guides, blog search engines and search and meta-search engines and then establishing selection criteria according to the research goal.

An important contribution of this method is that it includes the analysis of websites' image dissemination to assess the capacity the information sources targeted have to disseminate the information they convey. Studying relevant Internet-related aspects about image dissemination (visibility, usage and size) is fundamental for online image studies to assess their potential impact, how visible they are online and in the social media, what audience and users they have, how popular they are, what size or how much content about a specific case study exists in these websites, etc. However, studies do not usually assess these so important aspects of studying image construction and influence in online contexts.

The massive treatment of data is one of the main strong points of this methodology. Until now, studies have analysed small samples of travel blogs and reviews (some tens or a few hundreds) due to the difficulties of gathering and treating them. Our study processed 123,161 valid travel blog and review entries in several languages and analysed different database levels of targeted blogs and reviews about a specific destination: 27,104, 25,357 and 23,435 blogs and reviews. These were all the travel blogs and reviews about our case study existing on the websites fulfilling the criteria. The key to enabling such massive treatment of data was to download the website pages and entries to the PC through offline browsers and then arrange them into a structure of folders and files which enabled the classification of files according to different concepts. After that, data cleaning and data debugging were performed to prepare the database for the massive treatment of data. The language of the data was also determined through a language detection programme and data mining was performed so that information could be obtained about bloggers.

In relation to the data mining, the present methodology contributes to the advancement of online information analysis through the building and preparation of a consistent database, from which several studies can be undertaken. It deals with the major difficulties encountered when analysing user-generated content (noise, misspellings, etc.). We were able to gather a good database, to clean up all the noise and leave only what was written by the tourist without losing the important information of the html language that is so relevant in image dissemination issues.

Quantitative content analysis performed on online texts, based on word counts or frequencies and word grouping into categories, proved to be a useful and appropriate method of analysis to shed light on the projected and perceived images of a destination, especially having an advantage over qualitative methods in identifying and quantifying the main elements of this image, in enabling the comparison of large data sets and the summary of results. Computerized content analysis through Site Content Analyser and other software are suitable to deal with quantitative data and large sets of analysis. Apart from word frequencies themselves it was very important to include the relevant website measures, site-wide density and average weight, which are relevant measures in an online context as the former looks for the density of a concept or category in all of the analysed webpages and the latter takes into account the text hierarchy to determine the weight of a concept, which is so relevant in html language and for search engines. After that, it was useful to include measures file per file to compare results and conduct descriptive statistics measures as well as correlations between the different concepts, and perform cluster analysis. In this respect, a strong point of the methodology is that it combines results relative to the total databases and results relative to each file, and therefore subsequent results are more consistent and contrasted.

One limitation observed in literature content analysing texts through word counts is that they are based on the keyword counts themselves (incurring such problems as homographs, plurals and singulars, verb tenses, multiword concepts, etc.) and this limits the analysis to a shallow level. In spite of that, in this research these problems were solved and a deeper level of analysis was achieved through building multiple categories formed by many keywords related to the category subject. Therefore, the measures and obtention of data were conducted not on simple words but on categories conveying multiple words. As far as we are aware, even if word counts have been frequent, no other research has built word groups or categories *a priori* and obtained data concerning them.

Moreover, the topics of categorization (attraction factors, feelings and opposite concepts, cultural identity and geographical references) proved very useful to reveal the different aspects of tourist image identity. We were able to see the different mentioned attraction factors of the destination (which has been often studied) and, especially, we were able to shed light on aspects often overlooked in online tourist image studies. These aspects include the cultural identity issues which have not been analysed in online media through word counts and categorization and the issue of the spatial image distribution, which has also been overlooked by the existing literature. These elements are very frequent in tourist image as all groups of categories appeared among the most frequent words in the case of Catalonia.

Another benefit of the present methodology is that it enables us to look deeper into certain complex aspects, such as cultural identity, in this case into the perception of the Catalan language. This more detailed view of certain aspects was achieved through the search for regular expressions where the targeted subject appeared and then by seeing how it related to other relevant elements. Although searching for regular expressions is very useful to gain details about certain elements, it is a tool that has not been found to have been used before in destination image studies. Therefore, this research method provides a valuable tool that should be considered in online text analyses.

An aspect which is emphasized by this methodology that is often overlooked by online image research is the spatial element of tourist image. Travel blogs and reviews have the particularity of being geo-located, and thanks to that, information of the image of different Catalan territories was obtained. Furthermore, this research examines in greater detail the spatial distribution of image by applying and adapting several spatial indexes (location quotient, localization coefficient, specialization coefficient, diversification coefficient) which belong to the theory of industrial/economic sectors, to the study of tourist image through words. These measures usually serve to see where and how certain sectors of activity are located and distributed across different regions. In our case, they served to see how the different brand territories were specialized in the different tourist attraction factors (image), where the different elements were located, and what makes them unique relative to the whole region studied. Furthermore, these measures showed new information about specialization and particularities of the minor brands that were not visible when working in absolute numbers. This adaptation is new, as far as the author is aware, and opens up new possibilities for the application of spatial and geographic measures to the study of tourist image.

5.3. Further Research

Image in relation to cultural identity has been very little studied in online image studies. Further research should be performed on specific identity issues especially as reflected in online tourists' images and texts, and also compared to the images projected by the DMOs. Especially, tourist destinations with contested identities should be targeted and what role the tourists play in such contexts towards the enhancement or dilution of local cultural identities should be analysed. Future research should explore which is the tourists' level of understanding of the destination's socio-cultural context and its cultural identities, and what is the role of user-generated image in the formation and transmission of stereotypes and the effect stereotypes may exert on the complex context of Catalonia.

More research should be done in order to explore the differences and gaps between projected and perceived images, especially between tourists' images and destination-determined images. As identified by Chen et al. (2008), still little research has been conducted to analyse the image held by tourists and by DMOs simultaneously. Pitt et al. (2008) pointed out the need to study the image present in online sources such as blogs and then compare it to official image to spot the gaps and ways to improve brand image. Further studies about image dissonance and congruency are needed.

Due to the temporal-located nature of travel blogs and reviews, evolutionary content image studies should be conducted, especially for user-generated contents to analyse their temporal changes and transformations, to see how they evolve, in what sense, under what conditions, at what pace, etc. and better understand their nature. What cultural identity is transmitted by bloggers and reviewers could be tracked over the years to see if there is an evolution towards the projection of a more autochthonous Catalan image or the Spanish stereotyped image remains the same or even increases.

Future studies should explore the tourists' transmitted image online which is still highly unknown. It is very important for future research to determine what user-generated content

is transmitted about a destination and by what type of tourists. The origin of users should be explored in relation to possible cultural nuances to see if the origin of tourists posting online coincides with the origin of the general tourist public in a destination, in relation to the fact that it is the tourists who live further away from the destination (potentially having more stereotyped or simpler views about it), that post most content about it.

By obtaining similar databases to ours, researchers could perform qualitative analyses with the help of programmes such as NVivo, which could give a different understanding of data, a deeper comprehension of the subject and be complementary to quantitative data. Quantitative analysis has enabled us to see what elements appeared in tourists' images, with what frequency, and the relationships between them to obtain statistical inferences and compare large data sets. Qualitative analyses could give an insight into other related or complementary aspects such as why tourists project a certain image, to whom, by means of what narrative resources, what are the explicit and implicit meanings these images convey and in what context, what are the linguistic structures and nuances used, etc. They could also shed light on the analysis of specific themes or subjects of interest. How the massive online information can be useful for qualitative analyses remains to be explored.

A still relatively unexplored field regarding tourist image online is that of its relation to space and to the different destinations embodied in the spatial component of image, which is especially relevant in the case of the perceived image by tourists. The new possibilities offered by the social media to geolocate tourists' perceptions and to track tourists' actions, feelings, behaviours, etc. in relation to tourist spaces and destinations are enormous. However, this field is highly unexplored. Several territories and their brands (functioning, visibility, personality, etc.) can be analysed and compared through this relationship between image and space established by tourists in the social media. Moreover, in relation to that, a new field of exploration would be the application or adaptation of spatial and economic measures or indexes to tourist image distribution.

Future online image studies should explore the mechanisms through which image is expressed, transmitted and perceived by other tourists. They should explore the "sharing" experience phenomenon and the fact that information in general, and tourist image, may be increasingly created, transmitted and received in a solely user milieu and its implications.

Research is needed to determine the capacity to influence tourists and the trustworthiness of online images. In this respect, the capacity of image dissemination of different online media, especially User-Generated Content sources, should be compared to other official tourism or industry sources to determine the capacity each of the media has to disseminate the image of a specific destination and to most likely influence destination image formation and the expectations of tourists. Aspects such as visibility, usage and size should be explored for other case studies. Moreover, the field of user-to-user interactivity in online UGC spaces such as travel blogs and forums should be further explored to determine the degree with which virtual communities are actually formed and the bond tourists establish with those sources.

Studies about the adaptation of official tourism websites to UGC and web 2.0 should also be conducted. This should serve as advice for DMOs and businesses to direct their policies and image strategies online. More research is needed to explore the role of DMOs in online image formation, how they react and adapt to the 2.0 era in different contexts and

destinations, how they can handle the huge amount of user-generated contents online concerning their destination, and what their capacity of manoeuvre is in view of the possible image gaps concerning their destination, what are the best strategies to follow towards 2.0 contents, and how they must be implemented.

With regard to possible extensions and improvements of the present research with the current database we point out some areas of interest:

- This research analyses the text within travel blogs and reviews and on official tourism websites. In the case of travel blogs and reviews, with the current database it would be interesting to analyse text in specific html hierarchy positions to study specific elements such as tourists' photograph captions, and the titles in the case of travel blog and review entries. Studying photograph text captions would be interesting specifically to analyse the visual image of the destination and to get the exact interpretation tourists give to their photographs (avoiding researchers' possible misinterpretations). On the other hand, analysing only the titles of the blog and review entries is very important to see what are the most important or remarkable elements or concepts regarding users' trips to a destination (De Ascaniis & Gretzel, 2012)
- As mentioned, tourist image is a dynamic construct which evolves on a temporal basis. Therefore, as we have collected travel blogs and reviews for more than a decade, it is interesting to perform an evolutionary analysis of image to see if and how tourists' images change over the years and if this has something to do with social, cultural or economic events and situations or specific tourist policies.
- Specific groups of travel review contents classified as "local traditions and customs" could be explored in order specifically to study intangible heritage issues and cultural identity issues in UGC image.
- A broader view of the different tourist images of Catalonia or any destination could be gained by exploring different types of online sources. To gain an understanding of tourists' perceptions and UGC of a destination, other online social media should be explored, especially those specialized in the subject of tourism such as travel forums. In the case of projected image, other sources such as online travel agencies and guidebooks should be explored.
- The keywords within each category should be more deeply studied, especially those of feelings and opposite concepts which could lead to positive vs. negative dichotomies. It would also be interesting to perform a semantic network analysis with categories.

5.4. Social and institutional Implications

In the new online context where 2.0 communication seems to be becoming dominant, where user-generated and transmitted images are increasingly influent and play a more important part in tourist decision-making, DMOs face several challenges that must be addressed. With reference to tourist image online, it seems that destination-produced image is losing ground versus e-WOM and user-generated images. Moreover, these so popular user-generated images may be written by tourists who come from very distant countries and have little knowledge or very stereotyped ideas about the destination and its identity.

In such a context, knowing what is said about a destination online by users becomes fundamental for any destination. DMOs should monitor the social media and UGC

concerning their destination and identify the existing destination image gaps or weak points. Image congruency, in general and in terms of cultural identity between official images and tourists' images, is very important to see the effectiveness of promoting a brand-territory or destination. It can also help to assess the websites' efficiency, return on investments and need for improvements. Image transmitted by tourists online will create expectations that tourist organizations should be aware of. DMOs should ask what the image being transmitted online among users is. Is that image according to our will? How are my tourist resources and services valued?

DMOs should see which elements that are important for the destinations' strategy and that may convey valuable elements of identity are not well represented in online tourists' views. These elements need an appropriate presentation to become part of visitor imagery and hence attract tourism (Anton, 2010). DMOs should make an extra efforts to develop a strategy to address destination image gaps, implement and track their progress over time both through online and offline media. Furthermore, they should develop an image strategy built on the economy of identity, as differential cultural identities are an added value to tourism. DMOs should be aware of the unrestrained manner in which tourists may talk about both positive and negative experiences. The latter may represent a risk for the destination as negative images can be spread quickly through e-WOM. DMOs should monitor and address these negative aspects (such as unsafety) and not ignore them.

Counteracting implanted stereotypes and changing established images is very difficult but must be pursued by local organizations. The social media are an opportunity to break with undesired images and stereotypes and promote new images if they are handled in a strategic way and the intended ideas are well communicated, explained and visible. DMOs should build strategic plans (on how, what, to whom to transmit, etc.) through the different online channels and social media.

With reference to the new 2.0 communication era and to the loss of ground of official images compared to user-generated images, it may be the case that some DMOs are having trouble to adapt and incorporate 2.0 devices into their websites, to find the best ways of communication online, to make themselves visible on the net, etc. To be successful in this new context and to be able to disseminate the image they intend, DMOs should be highly aware of their positioning online and their capacity for image dissemination (visibility, usage, size). Official organizations should take the opportunity to incorporate web 2.0 devices into their sites and to become visible online and in the social media. Web 2.0 can be an opportunity for traditional agents, which will have to evolve by merging two different ways of communication to survive (Clever et al., 2009). The incorporation of UGC devices could raise their positioning in search engines (Cox et al., 2008b). Official organizations should be proactive in making sure their image dissemination online and in the social media is the best possible, providing opportunities to reach people and places previously unthinkable. They should use online positioning techniques and have a strategic Internet positioning plan and regularly study the visibility and usage of their website. Although destinations are no longer in control of the image being transmitted about them, they have to face possible image distortions or exaggerations that may be transmitted by tourists online and try to take their place in this environment. Due to the concentrated view tourists posting online seem to have, DMOs should study if their branding approach (regional and sub-regional brands) is

the most appropriate in the new online context, addressing issues such as brand reduction or simplification, the focus on an umbrella brand, etc.

DMOs also have a golden opportunity to project certain images and change stereotypes once tourists are on-site, usually before they write about their trips online. At this experiential moment of the trip, DMOs should make sure the desired image is well transmitted, well-coordinated with the multiple agents and community and in accordance with the identity and physical appearance of the destination. On-site, DMOs should try to raise tourists' awareness, make them part of the local identity and explain them the identity issues present. The development of image is a bilateral process between the observer and the observed, and it is possible to strengthen the image someone perceived *in situ* through symbolic artefacts, by re-educating he who perceives or remodelling the environment (Lynch 1960). In all cases, DMOs should not fall into only stressing the qualities most likely to attract outsiders because this may re-define and re-create social reality to fit those definitions (Papson, 1981). They should apply the best image strategy for the destination, its inhabitants and culture.

In the case of Catalonia, especially some elements related to cultural identity are almost invisible in travel blogs and reviews: Catalan intangible heritage, some tangible heritage elements, and such important Catalan cultural identity elements as the Catalan language. However, even in the case of official tourism websites, these such representative elements of Catalan cultural identity, and part of the Tourist Strategic Plan of Catalonia 2005-2010, have only a token presence. Catalan-specific intangible heritage elements are not strongly or insistently promoted, while other traditions belonging to Spanish identity are also promoted by official websites. In this respect, the explanation of the Catalan language does not seem to reach tourists before their arrival or during their trip. As the information expressed on blogs and reviews about Catalan is ambiguous, some tourists perceive the existence of the Catalan language but do not seem to understand or value it, or they are even bewildered by it.

In this respect, more *identity work* is needed if the economy of identity in Catalonia is to be fully implemented. The communicable local cultural products mentioned by Anton (2010) that should accompany such local identity boost cannot be clearly identified on official tourism websites. The attributes associated with cultural identity must be made attractive to tourists to draw their attention (André, 2010). Tourist organizations should try to recalibrate their efforts and promote these elements very strongly and actively educate about them in order to meet their identity strategy goals. If not, this drawback could be added to the fact that official websites have a minor potential to disseminate image and imply invisibility of the Catalan identity and of Catalonia as a definite, united and distinct territory.

In this respect, the great popularity of certain subjects or attraction factors among tourists (Barcelona, Gaudí, etc.) should be taken advantage of and channelled to promote the intended values and elements, in this case Catalan intangible heritage and identity. For example, bloggers and reviewers associate the popular subject of Gaudí more to a Spanish identity than to a Catalan cultural background. This type of weakness should be addressed by DMOs.

If, according to the Handbook on Tourism Destinations Branding published by the WTO in 2009, a destination's competitive identity is what makes it unique and memorable and is

fundamental for its international competitiveness, and works such as that of an “economy of identity: differentiation and country brand” (Llarch, 2010) support the positive effects of an economy based on the autochthonous identity and differentiation for destinations in order to be competitive, attract tourists and integrate tourism with the territory and its inhabitants in the best way, then in the case of Catalonia, more efforts should be undertaken to break with the Spanish stereotyped image and communicate a stronger Catalan image identity. Stronger promotion before, during and after the trip, especially of the Catalan intangible heritage elements should be undertaken and be present online and in the same destination experiences and products. It is during the on-site experience phase that DMOs can be most in control of the image displayed. The on-site environment could be prepared in a way that it would be attractive whilst showing the autochthonous identity. It is not only necessary to reach the tourists with the Catalan identity image projection but also to explain it, to make it visible on-site, to make them understand it. In the case of Catalonia, we observed that official tourism websites are not as visible as travel blogs and reviews online. We encourage Catalan DMOs to make their websites more visible online, as for example in the case of search engines, and to fully incorporate web 2.0 devices.

In summarizing, tourism websites should make an earnest effort to gain a good positioning and image dissemination, make their sites as attractive and usable as possible to tourists, incorporate web 2.0 into their sites, influence tourists while on-site, and explain their ideas, values and identities patiently and through multiple channels.

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- 3.59. Spatial indexes of general attraction factors per brands
- 3.60. Location indicators of specific attraction factors per brands
- 3.61. Spatial indexes of specific attraction factors per brands
- C.1. Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (Official tourism websites)
- C.2. Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (travel blogs and reviews)
- C.3. Correlations among feelings and dichotomies on official tourism websites
- C.4. Correlations among feelings and dichotomies in travel blogs and reviews

Annex A. Software review

Freeware, commercial and ad hoc software were used to process and analyse data. The methodology chapter details the programmes used for each section. To simplify routines or repetitive tasks we used scripts: BAT or CMD (batch programme) and VBS (Visual Basic Scripting edition) files. The more complicated tasks were programmed in Java language. For the inputs we used CSV (comma-separated values) and TBL (generic table) files, in addition to TXT (plain text) files.

For the advanced search and replace operations we used Regular expressions (RegEx). RegEx consists of constants and operator symbols that denote sets of strings and operations over these sets, respectively. Regular expressions are used by many text editors, utilities, and programming languages to search and manipulate text based on patterns.

A.1. Utilities:

- Able2Extract Professional (A2E)

A2E is the productivity utility for modern business, governmental, academic and non-profit environment. No more manual retyping - instead of spending hours of retyping data themselves, users of A2E get their PDF, HTML and Text files converted to Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, HTML or Text formats in seconds. Some of its features are:

- Its one-click command toolbar provides instant access to high quality conversion results
- A2E comes equipped with its own proprietary viewing technology. Its PDF viewing capabilities give users the advantage of a precise conversion output by letting them see the selected content they want converted.
- Convert one PDF or one hundred, A2E can handle it. A2E's batch interface simplifies the process. Set up your queue, your conversion output options, and then click once to start the batch conversion process.

- Actual Search & Replace (ASR).

Some of its features are:

- ASR provides search and replace operations across multiple ASCII (text, HTML, etc.) files
- You can find files by specifying the path, name masks, and a query
- You can search documents for a phrase or several words, multiline or regular expression and use the search engines style queries
- ASR displays abstracts from the searched files and highlights the search words/phrases in them
- Once you find the documents, you can replace, insert, and delete text in them
- You can save the report about the found files and detailed information about the occurrences found in them
- The batch replace operation allows executing a lot of various replacements with one click

Explained by ZDNet Review: "Use Actual Search & Replace to find files and execute search-and-replace operations across multiple files. This useful tool is fast and easy to use and of particular value to Webmasters who need to deal with ever-changing content on their Web sites. The powerful string search feature supports Boolean operators and displays and highlights matching strings. The even more powerful replace facility lets you insert text before or after search phrases, delete text, and replace text with spaces, in addition to standard text replacement. You can modify files one at a time or change them all with a single mouse click. Support is offered for both single and multiline entries. Options include filespec, date, and size filters; automatic backups of modified files; and full undo support."

- HTMLasText (HAT)

HAT utility converts HTML documents to simple text files, by removing all HTML tags and formatting the text according to your preferences. Some of its features are:

- HTMLasText automatically removes all tags and scripts from the document
- The remained text is formatted according to the number of characters per line that you select
- All HTML entities (e.g.: & , <) are converted into the corresponding ASCII characters
- You can convert multiple HTML files in the same folder at once, by using wildcard. (e.g.: c:\files*.html)
- You can run the conversion process without displaying any user interface, by using the /run command-line option.

A.2. Applications:

- IBM SPSS Statistics (SPSS)

SPSS offers the core statistical procedures business managers and analysts need to address fundamental business and research questions. This software provides tools that allow users to quickly view data, formulate hypotheses for additional testing, and carry out procedures to clarify relationships between variables, create clusters, identify trends and make predictions. SPSS includes the following key capabilities:

- Linear models offer a variety of regression and advanced statistical procedures designed to fit the inherent characteristics of data describing complex relationships.
- Nonlinear models provide the ability to apply more sophisticated models to data.
- Simulation capabilities help analysts automatically model many possible outcomes when inputs are uncertain, improving risk analysis and decision making.
- Customized tables enable users to easily understand their data and quickly summarize results in different styles for different audiences.

- Microsoft Expression Web (MEW)

MEW is a full-featured professional tool for designing, developing, and publishing compelling, feature-rich websites that conform to web standards. MEW gives you the tools you need to produce high-quality, standards-based Web sites: built-in support for today's

Web standards, sophisticated CSS design capabilities, and visual diagnostic tools. Whether you work with PHP, HTML/XHTML, CSS, JavaScript, ASP.NET or ASP.NET AJAX, MEW makes it faster and easier to create and maintain exceptional web sites.

- Offline Explorer Enterprise (OEE)

OEE is an offline browser that allows downloading an unlimited number of Web, secured (HTTPS) and FTP sites for later offline viewing, editing or browsing, and freeze the changing web for convenience, archiving and data mining. Some of its features are:

- The ability to download up to 500 files simultaneously and up to 100 million URLs per project
- The fastest-possible multi-threaded processing of downloaded files by using all CPU cores
- OEE allows setting the depth of the search for HTML documents. Level 0 means that OEE will load one page, referred by address (URL) with all images, sounds, etc. on the page; Level 1 means that OEE will load the first page and all pages linked to it with their images, etc.
- OEE allows selectively including or excluding individual servers, directories and files using keywords, and specify which file types to load and which to skip, based on their file extension, size, or location
- OEE supports URL macros. Macros are useful for scheduled automatic downloads when URL is changing every time. When it starts downloading the project, it substitutes macros with their values. URL Macros can be also used in URL filters (Included/Excluded keywords lists in Server, Directory and Filename sections)
- All downloaded web sites are stored in their native format, with no proprietary databases or formats. All links are made relative, so it is easy to move them to another place, or even publish collections of downloaded pages on an own web server

Due to the volume and weight of images and other multimedia contents, only text files are downloaded through corresponding file filter. Using the OEE option “Online link translation” restricted links (because of insufficient level setting, filters limitations, etc.) point to their original online documents and files. Hence, the HTML text to be processed is available on the local hard drive, and we can automatically browse the rest of the information with an online connection if needed.

- Site Content Analyzer (SCA)

SCA is new generation in website analysis software. It parses website online and offline for keywords, suggests the most relevant and weighty phrases, analyses link structure, and many more. With it, you can quickly discover the most relevant keywords and keyphrases for each page of your site, learn if the parameters of your site (that is keyword density, keyword weight, etc.) meet the guidelines of search engines. Moreover, all the info can be represented in a branded, highly-customizable report which you can export to PDF document or send by e-mail. Besides, with SCA you can:

- Manage different profiles to adjust the analysis according to your needs
- Learn site-wide keyword value as easy as single page-wide
- Export any acquired info into CSV file for even deeper keyword research

- Work with pages in any language due to Unicode support

A.3. Ad hoc programmes:

- PhD.java (PhD main programme)

```
import java.io.*;
import java.util.*;
import java.text.NumberFormat;

/**
 * Class which has three methods working with CSV files (comma-separated
 * values):
 * -Each record is one line terminated by a line feed (ASCII/LF=0x0A) or
 * a carriage return and line feed pair (ASCII/CRLF=0x0D 0x0A), however,
 * line-breaks can be embedded.
 * -Fields are separated by commas (although in locales where the comma is
 * used as a decimal point, the semicolon is used instead as a delimiter.
 *
 * The 1st method reads a file with groups or categories of words which is
 * used as an information source for the other two methods.
 * The 2nd method receives a set of files that contain a list of words and
 * their occurrence frequencies and return a table of frequencies with a
 * row for each file and a column for each category.
 * The 3rd method receives a file with a list of words, their frequency,
 * density and weight, and returns the list of words ordered by groups and
 * calculates the frequency, density and weight for each group.
 *
 * @version April 2012
 * @author E. Marine
 */
public class PhD
{
    /** Line break of the platform. */
    public static final String LS = System.getProperty("line.separator");

    /** Character strings separator. */
    public static final String TOKEN = ";";

    /** Category or group names. */
    static String header;

    /** Statistics table. */
    static int[][] statistics;

    /**
     * Method which loads to memory the content of a CSV file.
     * It considers that the 1st line contains heading information.
     * @param csv CSV file
     * @return array with the strings' lists of each line of the file
     */
    @SuppressWarnings("unchecked")
    public static List<String>[] loadCSV(File csvFile)
    {
        Vector<List<String>> vector = new Vector<List<String>>();
        BufferedReader in; // reader
        String line; // text line without characters '\r' ni '\n'

        try
```

```
{
    in = new BufferedReader( new FileReader(csvFile) );           // reader
    if ( (header = in.readLine()) != null )
        vector.add( Arrays.asList(header.split(TOKEN)) );       // header
    while ( (line = in.readLine()) != null )
        vector.add( Arrays.asList(line.split(TOKEN)) );         // records
    in.close();
    vector.trimToSize();
}
catch (IOException ioex)
{
    System.err.println("Input problem");
    ioex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
return (List<String>[])vector.toArray(new List[0]);
}

/**
 * Method that categorizes a list of CSV files.
 * @param directory folder where the files are located
 * @param pattern file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
 *                '*': any character zero or more times and
 *                '?': any character once
 * @param input categories CSV file
 * @param output statistics CSV file
 */
public static void categorize(String directory, String pattern,
                              String input, String output)
{
    List<File> files = UtilsIO.GetFiles(directory, pattern);
    List<String>[] categories = loadCSV(new File(input));
    statistics = new int[files.size()][categories.length];

    try
    {
        for (int i = 0; i < files.size(); i++)                    // files
        {
            String[][] csvf = UtilsIO.readCSVfields(files.get(i), 2);
            // zero and one rows have heading information
            for (int j = 2; j < csvf.length; j++)                // file rows
            {
                boolean found = false;
                // zero row has heading information
                for (int k = 1; k < categories.length && !found; k++)
                {
                    if (found = categories[k].contains(csvf[j][0]))
                        statistics[i][k] += Integer.parseInt(csvf[j][1]);
                }
            }
        }
        FileWriter out = new FileWriter(output, false);          // overwrite
        out.write(header + LS);                                   // header
        for (int v = 0; v < statistics.length; v++)              // rows
        {
            out.write(files.get(v).getName() + TOKEN);           // file name
            // zero column is not used
            for (int w = 1; w < statistics[v].length; w++)        // columns
            {
                out.write(statistics[v][w] + TOKEN);              // count
            }
        }
    }
}
```

```

        out.write(LS);                                // line separator
    }
    out.close();
}
catch (NumberFormatException nfex)
{
    System.err.println("Number problem");
    nfex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
catch (IOException ioex)
{
    System.err.println("Output problem");
    ioex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
}

/**
 * Method which counts word groups.
 * @param CSVgroups   file where the groups are found
 * @param CSVinput    file with word frequencies, densities and weights
 * @param CSVoutput   file with frequencies, densities and weights per
 *                    groups
 */
public static void group(String CSVgroups, String CSVinput,
                        String CSVoutput)
{
    NumberFormat nf = NumberFormat.getInstance(Locale.ENGLISH);
    nf.setMaximumFractionDigits(2); nf.setMinimumFractionDigits(2);
    String[][] input = UtilsIO.readCSVfields(new File(CSVinput), 4);
    List<String>[] groups = loadCSV(new File(CSVgroups));
    StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder(input[0][0] + TOKEN +
        input[0][1] + TOKEN + input[0][2] + TOKEN + input[0][3] + LS);

    try
    { // zero row has heading information (group names)
        for (int i = 1; i < groups.length; i++)           // groups
        {
            int count = 0; float dens = 0.0f, weig = 0.0f;
            for (int j = 0; j < groups[i].size(); j++)      // words
            {
                boolean found = false;
                // zero row has heading information
                for (int k = 1; k < input.length && !found; k++) // freqs
                {
                    if ( found = input[k][0].equals(groups[i].get(j)) )
                    {
                        sb.append(input[k][0] + TOKEN + input[k][1] + TOKEN +
                            input[k][2] + TOKEN + input[k][3] + LS);
                        int temp = Integer.parseInt(input[k][1]);
                        count += temp;
                        dens += Float.parseFloat( input[k][2].substring(
                            0, input[k][2].length()-1) );
                        weig += Float.parseFloat(input[k][3]) * temp;
                    }
                }
            }
            sb.append("_GROUP " +
                groups[0].get(i) + TOKEN + count + TOKEN + nf.format(dens)
                + '%' + TOKEN + nf.format(weig / count) + LS);
        }
    }
}

```

```
    }
    UtilsIO.writeTextFile(new File(CSVoutput), sb, false);
}
catch (NumberFormatException nfex)
{
    System.err.println("Number problem");
    nfex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
}

/**
 * Starting point for the execution of the code in this application.
 * @param args parameters or arguments array
 */
public static void main(String[] args)
{
    if (args.length < 3 || args.length > 4)
    {
        System.err.println(
            "\nUse: " +
            "java PhD GroupsCSVfile WordsFreqCSVfile outputCSVfile");
        System.err.println(
            "\nUse:\njava PhD CSVsDirectory 'PatternWithWildcards[*]' " +
            "CategoriesCSVfile OutputCSVfile");
        System.exit(1);
    }
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
    if (args.length == 3)
        group( args[0], args[1], args[2] );
    else if (args.length == 4)
        categorize( args[0], args[1], args[2], args[3] );
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
}
```

- [UtilsIO.java](#) (input/output and replace/remove utilities)

```
import java.io.*;
import java.util.*;
import java.util.regex.*;

/**
 * Class which implements utilities for reading and writing text, HTML
 * (HyperText Markup Language) and CSV (comma-separated values) files.
 * It also searches, removes and replaces strings.
 *
 * @version November 2011
 * @author E. Marine
 */
public class UtilsIO
{
    /** Line break of the platform. */
    public static final String LS = System.getProperty("line.separator");

    /** Character strings separator. */
    public static final String TOKEN = ";";

    /**
     * Method that returns a file array of a directory.
     * @param directory files folder
     */
}
```

```
* @param pattern  file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
*                  '*' : any character zero or more times and
*                  '?' : any character once
* @param list     array to save interesting files
* @param recursive true, reads all the tree recursively
*/
public static void listDirectory(String directory, String pattern,
                                List<File> list, boolean recursive)
{
    File dir = new File(directory);
    if (dir.isDirectory())
    {
        File[] files = dir.listFiles();
        for (int i = 0; i < files.length; i++)
        {
            if (files[i].isDirectory() && recursive)
                listDirectory(
                    files[i].getAbsolutePath(), pattern, list, recursive );
            else if ( files[i].getName().matches(pattern) )
                list.add(files[i]);
        }
    }
    else
    {
        System.err.println( "\n\tFile " +
                            directory + " is not a directory" );
        System.exit(1);
    }
}

/**
 * Method that returns a list of files in a directory or their
 * subdirectories which match a pattern.
 *
 * @param directory  files folder
 * @param pattern    file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
 *                  '*' : any character zero or more times and
 *                  '?' : any character once
 */
public static List<File> getFiles(String directory, String pattern)
{
    ArrayList<File> files = new ArrayList<File>();
    pattern = pattern.replace("'", "").replace(".", "\\.");
    pattern = pattern.replace("?", ".*").replace("*", ".*?");
    listDirectory(directory, pattern, files, true);
    files.trimToSize();

    return files;
}

/**
 * Method that reads a TBL file (Generic Table File) of records with
 * one or more fields each and stores them in an array.
 * @param txtFile   text file with a field on each line, except for the
 *                  first line which contains the total number of
 *                  records and the second with the number of record
 *                  fields
 * @return          table with records and fields
 */
public static String[][] readTBLfile(String txtFile)
{
}
```

```
BufferedReader in; // reader
String line = null; // text line without characters '\r' ni '\n'
String[][] table = null; // data array
int row = -1, col = -1; // row and column indexes

try
{
    in = new BufferedReader( new FileReader( new File(txtFile) ) );
    line = in.readLine();
    int records = Integer.parseInt(line);
    line = in.readLine();
    int fields = Integer.parseInt(line);
    table = new String[records][fields];
    while ( (line = in.readLine()) != null && records > 0)
    {
        if ( (col = ++col % fields) == 0 ) row++;
        if (col % fields == fields-1) records--;
        table[row][col] = line;
    }
    in.close();
}
catch (IOException ioex)
{
    System.err.println("Input problem");
    ioex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
catch (NumberFormatException nfex)
{
    System.err.println(line + " is not an Integer");
    nfex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
return table;
}

/**
 * Method that load the first fields of all the lines of a CSV file.
 * It is expected that there will be one or more lines and that the
 * records contain, at least, the number of fields to be read.
 * @param csvFile CSV file
 * @param fields number of fields to be read
 * @return list of arrays with interesting fields
 */
public static String[][] readCSVfields(File csvFile, int fields)
{
    Vector<String[]> vector = new Vector<String[]>();
    BufferedReader in; // reader
    String line; // text line without characters '\r' ni '\n'

    try
    {
        in = new BufferedReader( new FileReader(csvFile) );
        while ( (line = in.readLine()) != null )
            vector.add( Arrays.copyOf(line.split(TOKEN, -1), fields) );
        in.close();
        vector.trimToSize();
    }
    catch (IOException ioex)
    {
        System.err.println("Input problem");
    }
}
```

```
        ioex.printStackTrace();
        System.exit(1);
    }
    return (String[][] )vector.toArray(new String[0][0]);
}

/**
 * Method that loads a plain text file.
 * @param file plain text file
 * @return string with the file content
 */
public static StringBuilder readTextFile(File file)
{
    StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder();           // characters string
    FileReader in;                                   // reader of characters
    int count;                                       // counter of read characters
    char[] buffer = new char[(int)file.length()];   // buffer

    try
    {
        in = new FileReader(file);
        while ( in.ready() )
        {
            if ( (count = in.read(buffer)) > 0 )
                sb.append(buffer, 0, count);
        }
        in.close();
    }
    catch (IOException ioex)
    {
        System.err.println("Input problem");
        ioex.printStackTrace();
        System.exit(1);
    }
    return sb;
}

/**
 * Method that saves a string to disk.
 * @param file output file
 * @param text characters string intended to record
 */
public static void writeTextFile(File file, CharSequence text,
                                boolean append)
{
    try
    {
        FileWriter out = new FileWriter(file, append);
        out.append(text);                               // records to disk
        out.close();
    }
    catch (IOException ioex)
    {
        System.err.println("Output problem");
        ioex.printStackTrace();
        System.exit(1);
    }
}

/**
 * Method that repaces a character by a string but, if it finds two
```



```
* consecutive characters, it leaves one of them as a normal character
* and removes the other.
*
* @param str  text to process
* @param ch   character to be replaced
* @param subs  string replacing the character
* @return    a new characters string
*/
public static String replaceChar(String str, char ch, String subs)
{
    int index = 0;                                // position within the string

    while ( (index = str.indexOf(ch, index)) > -1 )
    {
        if (index == str.length()-1)
            str = str.substring(0, index) + subs;
        else
        {
            if (str.charAt(index+1) == ch)
            {
                str = str.substring(0, index) +
                    str.substring(++index);
                index++;                            // skip next character
            }
            else str = str.substring(0, index) + subs +
                str.substring(++index);
        }
    }
    return str;
}

/**
 * Method that searches the position of a text between the opening and
 * closing over an XML or similar directive (i.e. <tag> ... </tag>).
 *
 * @param str  markup language string
 * @param iniPos  initial position of the search
 * @param iniTag  tag opening
 * @param endTag  tag closing
 * @return  vector with two integers: initial and final position of the
 *          directive; if it does not find the initial or final text,
 *          it returns a negative number in the corresponding position
 */
public static int[] findDirective(String str, int iniPos,
                                String iniTag, String endTag)
{
    int[] result = {-1,0};

    if ( (iniPos = str.indexOf(iniTag, iniPos)) < 0 ) return result;
    result[0] = iniPos + iniTag.length();
    result[1] = str.indexOf(endTag, result[0]);

    return result;
}

/**
 * Method that searches the opening and the closing of a directive.
 * HTML documents use tags to indicate formatting or structural
 * information. A tag is simply a left angle bracket ( < ) followed by
 * a directive and zero or more parameters followed by a right angle
 * bracket ( > ). Note the fact that there are both starting and ending
```

```
* directive tags, and that the ending tag looks just like the starting
* tag except a slash ( / ) precedes the directive (i.e. <div ...> ...
* </div>). Directives may be nested inside.
*
* @param sb HTML file
* @param iniPos initial position of the search
* @param start directive initial text
* @param iniTag tag opening
* @param endTag tag closing
* @return vector with two integers: initial and final position of the
*         directive; if it does not find the initial or final text,
*         it returns -1 in the corresponding position
*/
public static int[] findDirective(StringBuilder sb, int iniPos,
                                String start, String iniTag, String endTag)
{
    int[] result = {-1,0};
    int index = 0; // position within the string
    int ini = 0, end = 0; // pointers position

    if ( (index = sb.indexOf(start, iniPos)) < 0 ) return result;
    result[0] = index;

    ini = end = index + start.length();
    ini = sb.indexOf(iniTag, ini);
    end = sb.indexOf(endTag, end);
    while (ini > -1 && ini < end) // nested directive ?
    {
        ini = sb.indexOf( iniTag, (ini + iniTag.length()) );
        end = sb.indexOf( endTag, (end + endTag.length()) );
    }
    if (end > index) result[1] = end + endTag.length();
    else result[1] = -1;

    return result;
}

/**
 * Method that removes all directive occurrences in a files directory
 * except for the first one found in each file.
 *
 * It replaces the vertical bar or pipe symbol ('|') for a line feed of
 * the platform but, if it finds two consecutive bars, it leaves one of
 * them as a normal character '|' and deletes the other.
 *
 * @param directory folder with HTML files
 * @param pattern file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
 *               '*': any character zero or more times and
 *               '?': any character once
 * @param start directive initial text
 * @param iniTag tag opening
 * @param endTag tag closing
 */
public static void removeDirectiveBut1st(String directory,
                                         String pattern, String start, String iniTag, String endTag)
{
    StringBuilder sb = null;
    List<File> files = getFiles(directory, pattern);
    start = replaceChar(start, '|', "\n");
    iniTag = replaceChar(iniTag, '|', "\n");
    endTag = replaceChar(endTag, '|', "\n");
}
```

```
for (File file: files)
{
    sb = readTextFile(file);
    int[] find = findDirective(sb, 0, start, iniTag, endTag);
    if (find[1] > 0)
        if ( removeDirective(sb, find[1], start, iniTag, endTag) )
        {
            writeTextFile(file, sb, false);
            System.out.println(file.getPath());
        }
    }
}

/**
 * Method that removes all the occurrences of an HTML directive.
 * HTML documents use tags to indicate formatting or structural
 * information. A tag is simply a left angle bracket ( < ) followed by
 * a directive and zero or more parameters followed by a right angle
 * bracket ( > ). Note the fact that there are both starting and ending
 * directive tags, and that the ending tag looks just like the starting
 * tag except a slash ( / ) precedes the directive (e.g. <div ...> ...
 * </div>). Directives may be nested inside.
 *
 * @param sb HTML file
 * @param iniPos initial search position
 * @param start directive initial text
 * @param iniTag tag opening
 * @param endTag tag closing
 * @return true, if the directive has been deleted; false, if not
 */
public static boolean removeDirective(StringBuilder sb, int iniPos,
                                     String start, String iniTag, String endTag)
{
    int index = 0; // position within the string
    int endPos = 0; // pointer in the final position

    while ( (index = sb.indexOf(start, iniPos)) > -1 )
    {
        iniPos = endPos = index + start.length();
        iniPos = sb.indexOf(iniTag, iniPos);
        endPos = sb.indexOf(endTag, endPos);
        while (iniPos > -1 && iniPos < endPos)
        {
            iniPos = sb.indexOf( iniTag, (iniPos + iniTag.length()) );
            endPos = sb.indexOf( endTag, (endPos + endTag.length()) );
        }
        if (endPos > index)
        {
            sb.delete( index, (endPos + endTag.length()) );
            iniPos = index;
        }
        else iniPos = index + start.length();
    }
    return endPos > 0;
}

/**
 * Method that replaces all occurrences of a substring by another.
 *
 * @param sb text
 */
```

```

* @param old   substring to be replaced
* @param str   substitute substring
* @return true, if the substring has been found; false, is not
*/
public static boolean replace(StringBuilder sb, String old, String str)
{
    int index = 0;                                // position within the string
    int oldLen = old.length();                    // length of the string to be replaced
    int newLen = str.length();                    // length of de substitute string

    while ( (index = sb.indexOf(old, index)) > -1 )
    {
        if (newLen == 0)  sb.delete(index, index + oldLen);
        else
        {
            sb.replace(index, index + oldLen, str);
            index += newLen;
        }
    }
    return index > 0;
}

/**
 * Method that removes or replaces all the occurrences of directives'
 * set of a files directory. It receives a table of records with three
 * fields each. If the first field is empty, replaces all the
 * occurrences of the third field (regular expression) by the second.
 * If the third field is empty, it replaces all the occurrences of the
 * first field by the second. If the second and the third fields are
 * empty, deletes all the occurrences of the first field.
 *
 * It replaces the vertical bar or pipe symbol ('|') by a line feed of
 * the platform but, if it finds two consecutive bars, it leaves one as
 * a normal character '|' and deletes the other.
 *
 * @param directory  HTML files folder
 * @param path       TBL file with three fields (one per line): begining of
 *                   the directive to be removed, opening of the tag and
 *                   closing of the tag; the first line contains the total
 *                   number of records and the second the total number of
 *                   fields of each record
 * @param pattern    file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
 *                   '*': any character zero or more times and
 *                   '?': any character once
 */
public static void remove(String directory, String path, String pattern)
{
    StringBuilder sb = null;
    List<File> files = getFiles(directory, pattern);
    String[][] fields = readTBLfile(path);
    for (int j = 0; j < fields.length; j++)
    {
        if (fields[j][0].length() > 0)
            fields[j][0] = replaceChar(fields[j][0], '|', "\n");
        if (fields[j][1].length() > 0)
            fields[j][1] = replaceChar(fields[j][1], '|', "\n");
        if (fields[j][2].length() > 0)
            fields[j][2] = replaceChar(fields[j][2], '|', "\n");
    }
    for (File file: files)
    {

```

```
sb = readTextFile(file);
for (int j = 0; j < fields.length; j++)
{
    if (fields[j][0].length() == 0) sb = new StringBuilder(
        sb.toString().replaceAll(fields[j][2], fields[j][1]) );
    else if (fields[j][2].length() == 0)
        replace(sb, fields[j][0], fields[j][1]);
    else removeDirective( sb, 0,
        fields[j][0], fields[j][1], fields[j][2] );
}
writeTextFile(file, sb, false);
}
}

/**
 * Starting point for the execution of the code in this application.
 * @param args parameters or arguments array
 */
public static void main(String[] args)
{
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());

    removeDirectiveBut1st("D:\\download\\TAfullRH",
        "ShowUserReview*.ht*", "<div id=\"review_\", \"<div\", \"</div>");

    /*removeDirectiveBut1st( "D:\\download\\IO\\www.igougo.com",
        "*review-*.ht*", "<!-- SINGLE REVIEW -->", "<!-- SINGLE REVIEW",
        "<!-- /SINGLE REVIEW -->" );*/
    /*remove("D:\\download\\VdA",
        "D:\\PhD\\Method\\CleanUp.tbl", "*.ht*");*/
    /*remove("D:\\download\\Spa",
        "D:\\PhD\\Method\\Spa\\SpaDelTag.tbl", ".htm");*/

    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
}
}
```

- ExportSCAproject.java (exporting Site Content Analyzer project)

```
import java.util.regex.Pattern;
import java.util.regex.Matcher;
import java.io.File;

/**
 * Program which exports some results obtained by Site Content Analyzer
 * in CSV (comma-separated values) format:
 * Field 1: word; Field 2: count; Field 3: weight; Field 4: density
 *
 * It also generatesT a CSV log file with a summary per folder:
 * Field 1: total words; Field 2: total weight; Field 3: folder name
 *
 * @version April 2012
 * @author E. Marine
 */
public class ExportSCAproject
{
    /** Operating system line feed. */
    public static final String LS = System.getProperty("line.separator");
    /** Output directory of CSV files. */
    public static String outputPath = null;
```

```

/** HTML root directory. */
public static String dir = null;
/** Log CSV file. */
public static StringBuilder log = null;
/** Pattern to get the list of unique words. */
public static final Pattern pList = Pattern.compile(
    "W(\\d+?)><L>(\\d+?)</L><Pos>(\\d+?)</Pos><RI>(\\d+?)</RI" );
/**
 * Pattern to get the header files (full path, number of words and
 * total weight).
 */
public static final Pattern pHead = Pattern.compile(
    "<N>(.*?)</N>.*?<TW>(\\d+?)</TW><TWg>(\\d+?)</TWg" );
/** Pattern to get the list of words and weight in each file. */
public static final Pattern pWord = Pattern.compile(
    "W\\d+?><I>(\\d+?)</I>.*?<Wg>(\\d+?)</Wg>" );
/** Pattern to get the word frequency. */
public static final Pattern pPoss = Pattern.compile(
    "<Pos\\d+?>.*?</Pos\\d+?>" );

/**
 * Method that exports, in CSV format, the words and frequencies of
 * HTML files process in the Site Content Analyzer project.
 *
 * @param str SCA project data delimited by tags (<tag>...</tag>)
 * @param uwords unique words list
 */
public static void getFiles(String str, String[] uwords)
{
    int fbounds[] = // files bounds
        UtilsIO.findDirective(str, 0, "<Files>", "</Files>");
    Matcher mHead = pHead.matcher(str);
    mHead.region(fbounds[0], fbounds[1]); // files region
    Matcher mWord = pWord.matcher(str);
    Matcher mPoss = pPoss.matcher(str);
    while (mHead.find())
    {
        String fullPath = mHead.group(1);
        String fileName = fullPath.substring(
            fullPath.lastIndexOf('\\')+1, fullPath.length() );
        if (! fileName.equals(""))
        {
            StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder();
            int wcount = 0;
            int wbounds[] = UtilsIO.findDirective(str, mHead.end(),
                "<Words>", "</Words>");
            mWord.region(wbounds[0], wbounds[1]); // word region
            while (mWord.find())
            {
                wcount++;
                mPoss.region(mWord.end(1), mWord.end(2)); // positions
                int wfreq = 0; // word frequency
                while (mPoss.find()) wfreq++;
                int index = Integer.parseInt(mWord.group(1));
                sb.append( uwords[index] + ';' + wfreq + ';' +
                    mWord.group(2) + "!=" + wfreq + "*100/" +
                    mHead.group(2) + LS );
            }
            sb.insert(0, "Word;Count;Weight;Density" + LS + fileName +
                ';' + wcount + " #" + mHead.group(2) + ';' +
                mHead.group(3) + "!=" + mHead.group(3) + '/' +

```

```
mHead.group(2) + LS);

if (outputPath == null) UtilsIO.writeTextFile( new File(
    fullPath.replace(".html", ".csv").
        replace(".htm", ".csv") ), sb, false );
else UtilsIO.writeTextFile( new File( outputPath +
    fileName.replace(".html", ".csv").
        replace(".htm", ".csv") ), sb, false );
}
else log.append(
    mHead.group(2) + ';' + mHead.group(3) + ';' + fullPath + LS );
}
UtilsIO.writeTextFile(new File(dir + "_SCA.log"), log, false);
}

/**
 * Method that reads the list of unique words from a Site Content
 * Analyzer project.
 *
 * @param str SCA project data delimited by tags (<tag>...</tag>)
 * @return unique words list
 */
public static String[] getWordsList(String str)
{
    int fnbounds[] = // file names
        UtilsIO.findDirective(str, 0, "<N>", "</N>");
    int uwbounds[] = // unique words
        UtilsIO.findDirective(str, 0, "<UW>", "</UW>");
    int uwcount = Integer.parseInt( // unique words
        str.substring(uwbounds[0], uwbounds[1]) );
    int twbounds[] = // total words
        UtilsIO.findDirective(str, 0, "<TW>", "</TW>");
    int twcount = Integer.parseInt( // total words
        str.substring(twbounds[0], twbounds[1]) );
    int tbounds[] = // text body
        UtilsIO.findDirective(str, 0, "<R>", "</R>");
    int wbounds[] = UtilsIO.findDirective( // words list
        str, tbounds[1], "<Words>", "</Words>" );

    String[] uwords = new String[uwcount]; // unique words list
    Matcher mList = pList.matcher(str);
    mList.region(wbounds[0], wbounds[1]);
    int idx, len, pos, ini;
    while (mList.find())
    {
        idx = Integer.parseInt(mList.group(1)); // word number
        len = Integer.parseInt(mList.group(2)); // word length
        pos = Integer.parseInt(mList.group(3)); // word offset
        String iniTag = "<R" + mList.group(4) + "><N>";
        ini = str.indexOf(iniTag, tbounds[0]) + iniTag.length() + pos-1;
        uwords[idx] = str.substring(ini, ini + len);
    }
    dir = str.substring(fnbounds[0],fnbounds[1]);
    String uw = str.substring(uwbounds[0],uwbounds[1]);
    String tw = str.substring(twbounds[0],twbounds[1]);
    log = new StringBuilder("UW: " + uw + ";TW: " + tw + ';' + dir +LS);
    log.append("Words;Weight;Folder" + LS);
    System.out.println( LS + LS + "Folder name: " + dir + LS +
        "Unique words: " + uw + LS + "Total words: " + tw + LS );

    return uwords;
}
```

```
}

/**
 * Method that exports the results from a Site Content Analyzer project
 *
 * @param path    full path name of SCA project
 */
public static void scaProj(String path)
{
    StringBuilder sb = UtilsIO.readTextFile(new File(path));
    Pattern pattern = Pattern.compile("[\\00\\01\\02]");
    Matcher matcher = pattern.matcher(sb);
    String str = matcher.replaceAll("");
    sb = null;
    str = str.replace("&<", "<").replace("&>", ">");
    str = str.replace("&/", "/").replace("&&", "&").replace("& ", " ");
    //UtilsIO.writeTextFile(
    //    new File(path.replace(".apr", ".xml")), str, false );
    String[] uwords = getWordsList(str);
    getFiles(str, uwords);
}

/**
 * Starting point for the execution of the code in this application.
 * @param args    parameters or arguments array
 */
public static void main(String[] args)
{
    if (args.length == 0)
    {
        System.err.println( "\nuse: java -Xmx2048m ExportSCAproject " +
            "path\\Project.apr outputDirectoryPath\\" );
        System.exit(1);
    }
    if (args.length == 2)
    {
        outputPath = args[1];
        if ( outputPath.lastIndexOf('\\') < (outputPath.length()-1) )
            outputPath = outputPath + '\\';
    }
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
    scaProj(args[0]);
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
}
}
```

• LanguageDetect.java (language detection)

```
import java.io.*;
import java.util.*;
import com.cybozu.labs.langdetect.Detector;
import com.cybozu.labs.langdetect.DetectorFactory;
import com.cybozu.labs.langdetect.Language;
import com.cybozu.labs.langdetect.LangDetectException;

/**
 * This program uses the language detection library written by Nakatani
 * Shuyo to generate a CSV (comma-separated values) file with 7 columns:
 * - FileName (plain text file)
 * - LangCode (ISO 639-1), LangName, SuccessProbability
 * - LangCode2 (ISO 639-1), LangName2, SuccessProbability2

```



```
* from some text files written in different languages
*
* Language detection library abstract:
* - Generate language profiles from Wikipedia abstract xml
* - Detect language of a text using naive Bayesian filter
* - 99% over precision for 53 languages
* - Downloads: http://code.google.com/p/language-detection/downloads/list
* - Requires JSONIC (bundled) http://sourceforge.jp/projects/jsonic/devel
*
* Abstract database files can be retrieved from "Wikipedia Downloads"
* To generate a Catalan language profile from abstract database:
* http://dumps.wikimedia.org/cawiki/latest/cawiki-latest-abstract.xml
* D:\PhD\Java\LangDete>dir /b *.xml
* cawiki-latest-abstract.xml
* D:\PhD\Java\LangDete>java -jar lib/langdetect.jar --genprofile ca
*
* @version   September 2011
* @author    E. Marine
*/
public class LanguageDetect
{
    /** Text files suffix. */
    public static final String TXT = ".txt";

    /** HTML files suffix. */
    public static final String HTM = ".htm";

    /** Line break of the platform. */
    public static final String LS = System.getProperty("line.separator");

    /** Character strings separator. */
    public static final String TOKEN = ";";

    /** Output file header. */
    public static final String HEADER = "FileName" + TOKEN + "LangCode" +
        TOKEN + "LangName" + TOKEN + "SuccessProbability" + TOKEN +
        "LangCode2" + TOKEN + "LangName2" + TOKEN + "SuccessProbability2";

    /** Available languages for detection and their ISO 639-1 codes */
    public static final String[][] CODES =
    {
        {"af", "Afrikaans"}, {"ar", "Arabic"}, {"bg", "Bulgarian"},
        {"bn", "Bengali"}, {"ca", "Catalan"}, {"cs", "Czech"},
        {"da", "Dannish"}, {"de", "German"}, {"el", "Greek"},
        {"en", "English"}, {"es", "Spanish"}, {"et", "Estonian"},
        {"fa", "Persian"}, {"fi", "Finnish"}, {"fr", "French"},
        {"gu", "Gujarati"}, {"he", "Hebrew"}, {"hi", "Hindi"},
        {"hr", "Croatian"}, {"hu", "Hungarian"}, {"id", "Indonesian"},
        {"it", "Italian"}, {"ja", "Japanese"}, {"kn", "Kannada"},
        {"ko", "Korean"}, {"lt", "Lithuanian"}, {"lv", "Latvian"},
        {"mk", "Macedonian"}, {"ml", "Malayalam"}, {"mr", "Marathi"},
        {"ne", "Nepali"}, {"nl", "Dutch"}, {"no", "Norwegian"},
        {"pa", "Punjabi"}, {"pl", "Polish"}, {"pt", "Portuguese"},
        {"ro", "Romanian"}, {"ru", "Russian"}, {"sk", "Slovak"},
        {"sl", "Slovene"}, {"so", "Somali"}, {"sq", "Albanian"},
        {"sv", "Swedish"}, {"sw", "Swahili"}, {"ta", "Tamil"},
        {"te", "Telugu"}, {"th", "Thai"}, {"tl", "Tagalog"},
        {"tr", "Turkish"}, {"uk", "Ukrainian"}, {"ur", "Urdu"},
        {"vi", "Vietnamese"}, {"zh-cn", "Simplified Chinese"},
        {"zh-tw", "Traditional Chinese"}
    };
};
```

```
/** Codes map. */
Map<String, String> codes = new HashMap<String, String>(64);

/** Text files. */
List<File> files;

/** Language identifier. */
Detector detector;

/**
 * Method that loads the language information and codes to memory, as
 * well as the files with the text to be identified.
 * @param profileDir directory where information of each language is
 *                  located
 * @param pattern file name pattern (case sensitive); may contain
 *                '*' : any character zero or more times and
 *                '?' : any character once
 * @param textDir directory where text files are located
 */
public void init(String profileDir, String textDir, String pattern)
    throws LangDetectException
{
    DetectorFactory.loadProfile(profileDir);
    DetectorFactory.setSeed(0);

    for (int c = 0; c < CODES.length; c++)
    {
        codes.put(CODES[c][0], CODES[c][1]);
    }
    files = UtilsIO.GetFiles(textDir, pattern);
}

/**
 * Method that identifies the language and the success probability.
 * @param reader reader of the text to be identified
 * @return code of the 1st and 2nd language and success probability
 */
public Language[] language(Reader reader)
    throws LangDetectException, IOException
{
    Language[] langs = new Language[2];
    detector = DetectorFactory.create();
    detector.append(reader);
    ArrayList<Language> langList = detector.getProbabilities();

    langs[0] = detector.getProbabilities().get(0);
    if (langList.size() > 1)
        langs[1] = detector.getProbabilities().get(1);
    else
        langs[1] = new Language("??", 0.0);

    return langs;
}

/**
 * Method that record the output CSV file
 * @param output file full path
 */
public void writeFile(File output)
{

```

```

try
{
    FileWriter out = new FileWriter(output, false);           // overwrite
    out.write(HEADER + LS);
    for (File file: files)
    {
        out.write(file.getPath().replace(TXT, HTM) + TOKEN); // file
        Language[] lang_prob = language(new FileReader(file));
        out.write(lang_prob[0].lang + TOKEN);                // lang code1
        out.write(codes.get(lang_prob[0].lang) + TOKEN);      // lang name1
        out.write(lang_prob[0].prob + TOKEN);                 // probability1
        if (lang_prob[1].prob != 0.0)
        {
            out.write(lang_prob[1].lang + TOKEN);             // code2
            out.write(codes.get(lang_prob[1].lang) + TOKEN);   // name2
            out.write(lang_prob[1].prob + TOKEN);              // probability2
        }
        out.write(LS);                                         // line separator
    }
    out.close();
}
catch (IOException ioex)
{
    System.err.println("Output problem");
    ioex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
catch (LangDetectException ldex)
{
    System.err.println("Language detect problem");
    ldex.printStackTrace();
    System.exit(1);
}
}

/**
 * Starting point for the execution of the code in this application.
 * @param args parameters or arguments array
 */
public static void main(String[] args) throws LangDetectException
{
    if (args.length != 4)
    {
        System.err.println("\nUse:\njava LanguageDetect ProfileDir " +
            "TxtDir 'PatternWithWildcards[*]' OutputCSVfile");
        System.exit(1);
    }
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
    LanguageDetect ld = new LanguageDetect();
    ld.init( args[0], args[1], args[2] );
    ld.writeFile( new File(args[3]) );
    System.out.println(new java.util.Date());
}
}

```

- TB03arrange.cmd (TravelBlog.org arrangement)

```

@ECHO OFF
title TravelBlog.org arrangement
:: MS-DOS batch which deletes useless directories and files. It fixes some

```

technical errors and a misclassification due to a former territorial division by provinces.

```
:: OLD folders and files structure:  
:: root\TB\www.travelblog.org\Europe\Spain\Catalonia\town\blog-code.html  
:: root\TB\www.travelblog.org\Europe\Spain\Catalonia\Roses\blog-619853.html
```

```
:: NEW folders and files structure:  
:: root\TB\brand\town\yyyymmdd_code.html  
:: root\TB\cBrav\Roses\20110616_619853.html
```

```
set initime=IniTime: %DATE% %TIME%  
REM entries root directory:  
set TB=D:\download\TB  
set CAT=%TB%\www.travelblog.org\Europe\Spain\Catalonia  
REM settings directory:  
set ST=D:\PhD\Method
```

```
ERASE /s %TB%\Descr.WD3 >NUL  
ERASE /s %TB%\default.htm >NUL  
ERASE /s %TB%\*.tmp  
ERASE /s %TB%\blogs-*.html >NUL
```

```
REM fixes errors  
MOVE "%CAT%\Barcelona\??Ovr0" "%CAT%\Barcelona\Bcn0"  
MOVE "%CAT%\Barcelona\??Ovr1" "%CAT%\Barcelona\Bcn1"  
RMDIR /s /q "%CAT%\Barcelona\"
```

```
MOVE %CAT%\Besal- %CAT%\Besalu  
MOVE %CAT%\Cadaqu-s %CAT%\Cadaques  
MOVE %CAT%\Matar- %CAT%\Mataro  
MOVE %CAT%\LEstartit %CAT%\L-Estartit
```

```
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Bcn0\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Bcn1\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Barcelona\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\La-Rambla\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Balsareny\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Esplugues-de-Llobregat\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Badalona\*.html %CAT%\Barcelona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Girona\Girona\*.html %CAT%\Girona >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Lleida\Lleida\*.html %CAT%\Lleida >NUL  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Monistrol-de-Montserrat %CAT%\Montserrat  
MOVE %CAT%\Barcelona\Sant-Pere-de-Ribes %CAT%\Sant-Pere-de-Ribes  
MOVE %CAT%\Lleida\Balaguer %CAT%\Balaguer  
MOVE %CAT%\Girona\Empuriabrava %CAT%\Empuriabrava  
MOVE %CAT%\Girona\Empuries %CAT%\Empuries  
MOVE %CAT%\Girona\Figueres %CAT%\Figueres
```

```
IF NOT EXIST %CAT%\Catalonia MKDIR %CAT%\Catalonia  
MOVE %CAT%\*.html %CAT%\Catalonia >NUL
```

```
REM removes empty directories  
REM FOR /f "delims=" %d in ('DIR /ad/b/s %TB% ^| SORT /R') do RMDIR "%d"
```

```
XCOPY /s /q %CAT%\blog-*.html %TB%  
RMDIR /s /q %TB%\www.travelblog.org
```

```
ECHO.:dates  
REM replaces "blog-" by "yyyymmdd_" and renames ".html" to ".htm"  
REM sample: D:\download\TB\Barcelona\blog-509.html
```

```
REM sample: <span class="blog_date started">April 24th 2004</span>
FOR /r "%TB%" %%a in (*.html) do FOR /f "tokens=* delims=" %%b in ('cscript
%ST%\takeout.vbs //nologo "%%a" "blog_date started~>" "</span">') do CALL
:dates %%a "%%b"
GOTO :brands
```

```
:dates
set fname=%1
set nname=%fname:~0,-1%
set odate=%2
REM sample: "April 24th 2004"
set odate=%odate:~1,-1%
set odate=%odate:January=01%
set odate=%odate:February=02%
set odate=%odate:March=03%
set odate=%odate:April=04%
set odate=%odate:May=05%
set odate=%odate:June=06%
set odate=%odate:July=07%
set odate=%odate:August=08%
set odate=%odate:September=09%
set odate=%odate:October=10%
set odate=%odate:November=11%
set odate=%odate:December=12%
set day=%odate:~3,-7%
IF %day% LEQ 9 set day=0%day%
set ndate=%odate:~-4%%odate:~0,2%%day%
set aux=set nname=%%nname:blog-=%ndate%_%%
CALL %aux%
MOVE %fname% %nname% >NUL
GOTO :eof
```

```
:brands
ECHO.:brands
REM sample: Roses;cBrav
FOR /f "skip=1 tokens=1,2 delims=;" %%p in (%ST%\TownBrand.csv) do IF EXIST
%TB%\%%p CALL :brand %%p %%q
ECHO.
ECHO.%initime%
ECHO.EndTime: %DATE% %TIME%
GOTO :eof
```

```
:brand
IF NOT EXIST %TB%\%2 MKDIR %TB%\%2
MOVE %TB%\%1 %TB%\%2\%1 >NUL
GOTO :eof
```

• TA03arrange.cmd (TripAdvisor.com arrangement)

```
@ECHO OFF
title TripAdvisor.com arrangement
:: MS-DOS batch which deletes accidentally duplicated entries and wrong
entries (Error 302: File moved). It also transforms the structure of
folders and files to enable the classification of webpages according to
different concepts.
:: As all reviews appear along with other reviews on the same subject,
previously, to avoid duplicities, all other reviews must be removed and
leave only the own review of the page (which is the first one).

:: OLD folders and files structure:
```

```
:: root\TA\www.tripadvisor.com\generated\ShowUserReviews-locationCode-  
attractionORactivityCode-reviewCode-attractionORactivityName-  
locationName.html  
:: Sample root\TA\www.tripadvisor.com\%&Ovr222\ShowUserReviews-g562814-  
d667082-r2299851-PortAventura_Park-Salou_Costa_Dorada_Catalonia.html  
  
:: NEW folders and files structure:  
::  
root\TA\brand\town\yyyymmdd_locationCode_attractionORactivityCode_reviewCod  
e_attractionORactivityName.htm  
:: Sample  
root\TA\cDaur\Salou\20040715_g562814_d667082_r2299851_PortAventura-Park.htm  
  
set initime=IniTime: %DATE% %TIME%  
REM entries root directory:  
set TA=D:\download\TAallRH  
REM settings directory:  
set ST=D:\PhD\Method  
  
ERASE /s %TA%\Descr.WD3 >NUL  
ERASE /s %TA%\*.tmp >NUL  
ERASE /s %TA%\default.htm  
REM deletes duplicated entries (3 / 242,774)  
ERASE %TA%\www.tripadvisor.com\*copia.html  
REM deletes wrong entries. Error 302: File moved. (14 / 242,771)  
FOR /f "tokens=* delims=" %%a in ('FINDSTR /m /c:"302 File moved"  
%TA%\www.tripadvisor.com\ShowUserR*.html') do ERASE %%a  
  
FOR /r "%TA%\www.tripadvisor.com" %%b in (ShowUserR*.html) do MOVE "%%b"  
"%TA%" >NUL  
RMDIR /s /q %TA%\www.tripadvisor.com  
  
ECHO.:dates  
REM sample: D:\download\TA\ShowUserReviews-g187503-d244230-r123019454-  
Archaeology_Museum_of_Tarragona_Museu_Nacional_Arqueologic_de_Tarragona-  
Tarragona_Costa_Dorada_Catalonia.html:<span class="ratingDate">Reviewed  
January 13, 2012  
FOR /r "%TA%" %%c in (ShowUserR*.html) do FOR /f "tokens=* delims=" %%d in  
( 'cscript %ST%\takeout.vbs //nologo "%%c" "ratingDate~>Reviewed "  
"TakeOutLF"') do CALL :dates %%c "%%d"  
REM fixes errors  
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\Mont-roig-del-Camp MKDIR %TA%\Mont-roig-del-Camp  
MOVE %TA%\Montroig\*.htm %TA%\Mont-roig-del-Camp  
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\Sant-Cugat-del-Valles MKDIR %TA%\Sant-Cugat-del-Valles  
MOVE %TA%\Sant-Cugat\*.htm %TA%\Sant-Cugat-del-Valles  
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\Sant-Esteve-de-Palautordera MKDIR %TA%\Sant-Esteve-de-  
Palautordera  
MOVE %TA%\San-Esteban-de-Palautordera\*.htm %TA%\Sant-Esteve-de-  
Palautordera  
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\Sant-Pol-de-Mar MKDIR %TA%\Sant-Pol-de-Mar  
MOVE %TA%\San-Pol-de-Mar\*.htm %TA%\Sant-Pol-de-Mar  
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\Santa-Susanna MKDIR %TA%\Santa-Susanna  
MOVE %TA%\Santa-Susana\*.htm %TA%\Santa-Susanna  
GOTO :brands  
  
:dates  
set fname=%1  
set odate=%2  
REM sample: "January 13, 2012"  
set odate=%odate:~1,-1%  
set year=%odate:~-4%
```

```
REM deletes reviews written in 2012 (27,615 / 242,757)
REM IF "%year%" == "2012" (ERASE "%fname%" & GOTO :eof)
REM deletes reviews without text inside the body of the writing (112,698 /
215,142)
REM sample: <p id="review_text_117199716"></p>
REM FINDSTR /m "review_text_" %fname%
REM IF %errorlevel%==0 (ERASE %fname% & GOTO :eof)
set odate=%odate:January=01%
set odate=%odate:February=02%
set odate=%odate:March=03%
set odate=%odate:April=04%
set odate=%odate:May=05%
set odate=%odate:June=06%
set odate=%odate:July=07%
set odate=%odate:August=08%
set odate=%odate:September=09%
set odate=%odate:October=10%
set odate=%odate:November=11%
set odate=%odate:December=12%
set day=%odate:~3,-6%
IF %day% LEQ 9 set day=0%day%
set ndate=%year%%odate:~0,2%%day%
REM sample: D:\download\TA\ShowUserReviews-g315921-d254665-r116684714-
Dali_Theatre_Museum_Teatro_Museo_Dali-
Figueres_Province_of_Girona_Catalonia.html to
REM D:\download\TA\20110814_g315921-d254665-r116684714-
Dali_Theatre_Museum_Teatro_Museo_Dali-
Figueres_Province_of_Girona_Catalonia.html
set aux=set nname=%fname:ShowUserReviews-=%ndate%_%%
CALL %aux%
REM sample: D:\download\TA\20110814_g315921-d254665-r116684714-
Dali_Theatre_Museum_Teatro_Museo_Dali-
Figueres_Province_of_Girona_Catalonia.html
set nname=%nname:_Costa_Brava=%
set nname=%nname:_Alt_Camp=%
set nname=%nname:_Costa_Dorada=%
set nname=%nname:_Province_of_Girona=%
set nname=%nname:_Province_of_Tarragona=%
set nname=%nname:_Province_of_Lleida=%
set nname=%nname:_Terres_de_l'Ebre=%
set nname=%nname:_Catalonian_Pyrenees=%
set nname=%nname:-Catalonian_Pyrenees=-Pyrenees%
set nname=%nname:-Province_of_Barcelona=-Barcelona%
set nname=%nname:-Province_of_Tarragona=-Costa_Daurada%
set nname=%nname:-Costa_de_Barcelona_Maresme=-Costa_Barcelona%
set nname=%nname:-Costa_Dorada=-Costa_Daurada%
FOR /f "tokens=4-8 delims=\-" %%j in ("%nname%") do CALL :towns %%j %%k %%l
%%m %%n
GOTO :eof

:towns
set titl=%4
set town=%5
set town=%town:_Catalonia=%
set town=%town:~0,-5%
set town=%town:_=-%
IF NOT EXIST %TA%\%town% MKDIR %TA%\%town%
MOVE %fname% %TA%\%town%\%1_%2_%3_%titl:=-%.htm >NUL
GOTO :eof

:brands
```

```

ECHO.:brands
REM sample: Roses;cBrav
FOR /f "skip=1 tokens=1,2 delims=;" %%f in (%ST%\TownBrand.csv) do IF EXIST
%%TA%\%%f CALL :brand %%f %%g
REM removes empty directories
FOR /f "delims=" %%h in ('DIR /ad/b/s %%TA% ^| SORT /R') do RMDIR "%%h" >NUL
GOTO :suffixes

:brand
REM sample: D:\download\TA\Roses\* to D:\download\TA\cBrav\Roses\*
IF NOT EXIST %%TA%\%%2 MKDIR %%TA%\%%2
MOVE %%TA%\%%1 %%TA%\%%2\%%1 >NUL
GOTO :eof

:suffixes
ECHO.:suffixes
REM adding the suffix _Hote
REM sample: <a href="Hotels-g187496-Catalonia-Hotels.html">Catalonia
Hotels</a></li>
FOR /f "tokens=* delims=" %%p in ('FINDSTR /s /m /c:"Hotels</a></li>"
%%TA%\*.htm') do CALL :suffix %%p Hote

REM adding the suffix _Rest
REM sample: <a href="Restaurants-g187497-
Barcelona_Catalonia.html">Barcelona Restaurants</a></li>
FOR /f "tokens=* delims=" %%q in ('FINDSTR /s /m /c:"Restaurants</a></li>"
%%TA%\*.htm') do CALL :suffix %%q Rest
ECHO.
ECHO.%initime%
ECHO.EndTime: %DATE% %TIME%
GOTO :eof

:suffix
set name=%1
MOVE %name% %name:~0,-4%_%%2.htm >NUL
GOTO :eof

REM 242,757 files processed in 2d 19h 5m 26s
REM Intel Core i7 CPU; Q 720 @ 1.60GHz; 4.00 GB RAM
REM Windows 7 Ultimate 64 bits; SATA hard drive 7200 rpm
    
```

• TakeOut.vbs (utility)

```

'Visual Basic Script that returns a substring between two strings
'It replaces some unsuitable characters from arguments
'MS-DOS command: cscript takeout.vbs //nologo textFile iniTag endTag
'Input: plain text file, initial tag and ending tag
'Replaces char '~' with a quote mark in the opening and closing tags
'Replaces string "TakeOutLF" with LineFeed
'Replaces string "TakeOutCRLF" with CarriageReturn + LineFeed
'Output: first substring of textFile (within iniTag and endTag), or ""
Set args = WScript.Arguments
If args.Count <> 3 Then
    Wscript.Echo
    Wscript.Echo "Usage: cscript takeout.vbs //nologo textFile iniTag
endTag"
    WScript.Quit 1
End If
Set fso = CreateObject("Scripting.FileSystemObject")
Set file = fso.OpenTextFile(args(0), 1) 'ForReading
    
```



```
iniTag = Replace(args(1), "~", Chr(34))           'replaces ~ with "  
endTag = Replace(args(2), "~", Chr(34))           'replaces ~ with "  
iniTag = Replace(iniTag, "TakeOutLF", vbLf)        'line feed Chr(10)  
endTag = Replace(endTag, "TakeOutLF", vbLf)        'line feed Chr(10)  
iniTag = Replace(iniTag, "TakeOutCRLF", vbCrLf)    'Chr(13) + Chr(10)  
endTag = Replace(endTag, "TakeOutCRLF", vbCrLf)    'Chr(13) + Chr(10)  
  
textStr = file.ReadAll  
file.Close  
  
iniPos = InStr(textStr, iniTag)  
iniSub = iniPos + Len(iniTag)  
endPos = InStr(iniSub, textStr, endTag)  
  
If (iniPos > 0) And (endPos > iniPos) Then  
    Wscript.Echo Mid(textStr, iniSub, endPos-iniSub)  
Else Wscript.Echo "" End If
```

• MonthsCounter.cmd (Entries-per-month counter)

```
@ECHO OFF  
title Entries-per-month counter  
SETLOCAL ENABLEDELAYEDEXPANSION  
  
REM entries root directory:  
set XX=%1  
IF "%1"==" " set XX=D:\download\VT  
REM settings directory:  
set ST=D:\PhD\Method  
  
set whole=0  
set sum=0  
set count=0  
ECHO.  
ECHO.Folder: %XX%  
ECHO.  
  
FOR /f "skip=1 tokens=1,2 delims=;" %%f in (%ST%\Months.csv) do CALL :month  
%%f %%g  
GOTO :summary  
  
:month  
FOR /r "%XX%" %%a in (????%1?? *.htm) do set /A count=!count!+1  
set /A sum=%sum%+%count%  
ECHO.%2: %count%  
set count=0  
GOTO :eof  
  
:summary  
FOR /r "%XX%" %%a in (*.htm) do set /A whole=!whole!+1  
  
set /A remain=%whole%-sum%  
ECHO.  
ECHO. SUM: %sum%  
ECHO. WHOLE: %whole%  
ECHO.REMAINDER: %remain%  
ECHO.  
ECHO.  
ECHO.Months.csv  
ECHO.num;code;name
```

ECHO.01;Jan;January
ECHO.02;Feb;February
ECHO.03;Mar;March
ECHO.04;Apr;April
ECHO.05;May;May
ECHO.06;Jun;June
ECHO.07;Jul;July
ECHO.08;Aug;August
ECHO.09;Sep;September
ECHO.10;Oct;October
ECHO.11;Nov;November
ECHO.12;Dec;December

1. Barna: badalona; barcelona; hospitalet de llobregat; sant adria de besos; sant adrià de besòs; santa coloma de gramenet.

2. CatCe: aguilars de segarra; aiguafreda; alpens; ametlla del valles; ametlla del vallès; argencola; argençola; artés; avinyo; avinyó; badia del valles; badia del vallès; balenya; balenyà; balsarenys; barbera del valles; barberà del vallès; bellprat; bigues i riells; bruc; brull; cabrera d'anoia; calaf; calders; caldes de montbui; calldetenes; callús; calonge de segarra; campins; canovelles; canoves i samalus; cànoves i samalús; capellades; cardedeu; cardona; castellar del valles; castellar del vallès; castellbell i el vilar; castellbisbal; castel·lir; castellfollit de riubregos; castellfollit de riubregós; castellfollit del boix; castellgali; castellgalí; castellnou de bages; castelloi; castelloí; castelltercol; castellterçol; centelles; cerdanyola del valles; cerdanyola del vallès; collsuspina; copons; espinelles; estany; figaro-montmany; figaró-montmany; fogars de montclús; fogars de montclús; folgueroles; fonollosa; franqueses del valles; franqueses del vallès; gaia; gaià; gallifa; garriga; granera; granollers; gualba; gurb; hostalets de pierola; igualada; jorba; la llacuna; llacuna; llagosta; llica d'amunt; lliçà d'amunt; llica de vall; lliçà de vall; llinars del valles; llinars del vallès; lluca; lluçà; malla; manlleu; manresa; marganell; martorelles; masies de roda; masies de voltrega; masies de voltregà; masquefa; matadepera; moia; moià; mollet del valles; mollet del vallès; monistrol de calders; monistrol de montserrat; montcada i reixac; montesquiu; montmaneu; montmelo; montmeló; montornès del valles; montornès del vallès; montseny; muntanyola; mura; navarçles; navas; navàs; odena; òdena; olost; orís; orís; orista; oristà; orpi; orpí; palau-solita i plegamans; palau-solità i plegamans; parets del valles; parets del vallès; perafita; piera; pobla de claramunt; polinya; polinyà; pont de vilomara i rocafort; prats de llucanes; prats de lluçanès; prats de rei; pujalt; rajadell; rellinars; ripollet; roca del valles; roca del vallès; roda de ter; rubí; rubí; rubió; rupit i pruit; sabadell; sallent; sant agustí de llucanes; sant agustí de lluçanès; sant antoni de vilamajor; sant bartomeu del grau; sant boi de llucanes; sant boi de lluçanès; sant celoni; sant cugat; sant esteve de palautordera; sant feliu de codines; sant feliu sasserra; sant fust de campsantelles; sant fruitós de bages; sant fruitós de bages; sant hipòlit de voltrega; sant hipòlit de voltregà; sant joan de vilatorrada; sant julia de vilatorrada; sant julià de vilatorrada; sant llorenç savall; sant llorenç savall; sant martí d'albars; sant martí d'albars; sant martí de centelles; sant martí de centelles; sant martí de tous; sant martí de tous; sant martí sesgueioles; sant martí sesgueioles; sant mateu de bages; sant pere de torelló; sant pere de torelló; sant pere de vilamajor; sant pere sallavinera; sant quinzè de besora; sant quinzè del valles; sant quinzè del vallès; sant quinzè safaja; sant sadurn d'osormort; sant sadurn d'osormort; sant salvador de guardiola; sant vicenç de castellet; sant vicenç de castellet; sant vicenç de torelló; sant vicenç de torelló; santa cecília de voltrega; santa cecília de voltregà; santa eugènia de berga; santa eugènia de berga; santa eulàlia de riuprimer; santa eulàlia de riuprimer; santa eulàlia de roncana; santa eulàlia de roncana; santa margarida de montbui; santa maria de besora; santa maria de corco; santa maria de corcó; santa maria de martorelles; santa maria de miralles; santa maria de palautordera; santa maria d'olo; santa maria d'oló; santa perpetua de mogoda; santa perpètua de mogoda; santpedor; sentmenat; sobremunt; sora; suria; súria; tagamanent; talamanca; taradell; tavernoles; tavèrnoles; taverdet; terrassa; tona; torelló; torelló; torre de claramunt; ullastrell; vacarisses; vallbona d'anoia; vallenguina; vallromanes; veciana; vic; vidra; vidrà; viladecavalls; viladrau; vilalba sasserra; vilanova de sau; vilanova del camí; vilanova del camí; vilanova del valles; vilanova del vallès.

3. cBarc: abrera; allela; arenys de mar; arenys de munt; argentona; avinyonet del penedès; avinyonet del penedès; begues; cabanyes; cabrera de mar; cabrils; caldes d'estrac; calella; canet de mar; canyelles; castel·ldefels; castellet i la gornal; castellví de la marca; castellví de la marca; castellví de rosanes; castellví de rosanes; cervello; cervelló; collbato; collbató; corbera de llobregat; cornella de llobregat; cornellà de llobregat; cubelles; dosrius; el prat; esparreguera; esplugues de llobregat; font-rubí; font-rubí; gava; gavà; gelida; malgrat de mar; martorell; masnou; mataro; mataró; mediona; molins de rei; montgat; olerdola; olèrdola; olesa de bonesvalls; olesa de montserrat; olivella; orrius; òrrius; pacs del penedès; pacs del penedès; palafolls; palleja; pallejà; palma de cervello; palma de cervelló; papiol; pineda de mar; pla del penedès; pla del penedès; pontons; premia de dalt; premià de dalt; premia de mar; premià de mar; puigdalber; puigdalber; sant andreu de la barca; sant andreu de llavaneres; sant boi de llobregat; sant cebria de vallalta; sant cebrià de vallalta; sant climent de llobregat; sant cugat sesgarrigues; sant esteve sesrovires; sant feliu de llobregat; sant iscle de vallalta; sant joan despi; sant joan despi; sant just desvern; sant llorenç d'hortons; sant llorenç d'hortons; sant martí sarroca; sant martí sarroca; sant pere de ribes; sant pere de riudebitlles; sant pol de mar; sant quintí de mediona; sant quintí de mediona; sant sadurn d'anoia; sant sadurn d'anoia; sant vicenç de montalt; sant vicenç de montalt; sant vicenç dels horts; sant vicenç dels horts; santa coloma de cervello; santa coloma de cervelló; santa fe del

penedes; santa fe del penedès; santa margarida i els monjos; santa susanna; sitges; subirats; teia; teià; tiana; tordera; torrelavit; torrelles; vallirana; viladecans; vilafranca; vilanova i la geltru; vilanova i la geltrú; vilassar de dalt; vilassar de mar; vilobi del penedes; vilobí del penedès

4. cBrav: agullana; aiguaviva; albanya; albanyà; albons; amer; anglès; arbucies; arbúcies; armentera; avinyonet de puigventos; avinyonet de puigventós; banyoles; bascara; bàscara; begur; belcaire d'emporda; belcaire d'empordà; bescano; bescanó; bisbal d'emporda; bisbal d'empordà; biure; blanes; boadella i les escaules; bordils; borrasa; borrasà; breda; brunyola; cabanelles; cabanes; cadaques; cadaqués; caldes de malavella; calonge; camallera i llampaies; camos; camós; campllong; canet d'adri; cantallops; capmany; cassa de la selva; cassà de la selva; castello d'empuries; castelló d'empúries; castell-platja d'aro; cellera de ter; celra; celrà; cervia de ter; cervià de ter; cistella; colera; colomers; corca; corçà; cornella del terri; cornellà del terri; crespia; crespia; cruïlles; cruïlles; darnius; empuriabrava; empuries; empúries; escala; espolla; esponella; esponellà; estartit; far d'emporda; far d'empordà; figueres; flaca; flaça; fogars de la selva; foixa; foixà; fontanilles; fontcoberta; forallac; fornells de la selva; fortia; fortià; garrigas; garrigàs; garrigoles; garriguella; girona; gualta; hostalric; illes medes; jafre; jonquera; juia; juià; llado; lladó; llagostera; llambilles; llanca; llança; llers; lloret; lloret de mar; macanet de cabrenys; maçanet de cabrenys; macanet de la selva; maçanet de la selva; madremanya; masarac; massanes; mollet de peralada; monells i sant sadurni de l'heura; monells i sant sadurní de l'heura; mont-ras; navata; ordis; osor; palafrugell; palamos; palamós; palau de santa eulalia; palau de santa eulàlia; palau-sator; palau-saverdera; palol de revardit; pals; parlava; parlavà; pedret i marza; pedret i marzà; pera; peralada; pont de molins; pontos; pontós; porqueres; port de la selva; portbou; quart; rabós; regencos; regencós; riells i viabrea; riudarenes; riudellots de la selva; riumors; roses; rupia; rupià; sant andreu salou; sant climent sescebes; sant feliu de buixalleu; sant feliu de guixols; sant feliu de guixols; sant gregori; sant hilari sacalm; sant joan de mollet; sant jordi desvalls; sant julia de ramis; sant julià de ramis; sant julia del llor i bonmatí; sant julià del llor i bonmatí; sant llorenç de la muga; sant llorenç de la muga; sant martí de llemenà; sant martí de llemenà; sant martí vell; sant martí vell; sant miquel de campmajor; sant miquel de fluvia; sant miquel de fluvia; sant mori; sant pere pescador; santa coloma de farners; santa cristina d'aro; santa llogaia d'alguema; santa llogaia d'alguema; sarria de ter; sarrià de ter; saus; selva de mar; serinya; serinyà; serra de daro; serra de daró; sils; susqueda; tallada de l'emporda; tallada de l'empordà; terrades; torrent; torroella de fluvia; torroella de fluvia; torroella de montgri; torroella de montgri; tossa; ulla; ullà; ullastret; ultramort; vajol; vall-llobrega; ventallo; ventalló; verges; vidreres; vilabertran; vilablareix; viladamat; viladasens; vilademuls; vilafant; vilajuiga; vilajuiga; vilamacolum; vilamalla; vilamaniscle; vilanant; vila-sacra; vilaur; vilaür; vilobi d'onyar; vilobí d'onyar; vilopriu; susqueda; tallada de l'emporda; tallada de l'empordà; terrades; torrent; torroella de fluvia; torroella de fluvia; torroella de montgri; torroella de montgri; tossa; ulla; ullà; ullastret; ultramort; vajol; vall-llobrega; ventallo; ventalló; verges; vidreres; vilabertran; vilablareix; viladamat; viladasens; vilademuls; vilafant; vilajuiga; vilajuiga; vilamacolum; vilamalla; vilamaniscle; vilanant; vila-sacra; vilaur; vilaür; vilobi d'onyar; vilobí d'onyar; Vilopriu.

5. cDaur: aiguamurcia; aiguamúrcia; albinyana; albiol; alcover; aleixar; alforja; alio; alió; almoster; altafulla; arboc; arboç; arbolí; arbolí; argentera; banyeres del penedes; banyeres del penedès; barbera de la conca; barberà de la conca; bellmunt del priorat; bellvei; bisbal de falset; bisbal del penedes; bisbal del penedès; blancafert; bonastre; borges del camp; botarell; brafim; bràfim; cabaces; cabacés; cabra del camp; calafell; cambrils; capafonts; capcanes; capçanes; castellvell del camp; catllar; colldejou; conesa; constanti; constantí; cornudella de montsant; creixell; cunit; duesaigues; duesaigües; esplugu de francolí; esplugu de francolí; falset; febro; febró; figuera; figuerola del camp; forés; forès; garidells; gratallops; guiamets; hospitalet de l'infant; la pineda; la riba; l'hospitalet de l'infant; lloar; llorac; llorenç del penedes; llorenç del penedès; marca; marçà; margalef; masllorenç; masllorenç; maso; masó; maspujols; masroig; mila; milà; molar; montblanc; montbrio del camp; montbrió del camp; montferri; montmell; mont-ral; mont-roig del camp; morell; morera de montsant; nou de gaia; nou de gaià; nulles; pallaresos; passant i belltall; perafort; piles de gaia; piles de gaià; pira; pla de santa maria; pobla de mafumet; pobla de montornes; pobla de montornès; poblet; poboleda; pont d'armentera; pontils; porrera; pradell de la teixeta; prades; pratdip; puigpelat; querol; renau; reus; riera de gaia; riera de gaià; riudecanyes; riudecols; riudoms; rocafort de queral; roda de bara; roda de barà; rodonya; rodonyà; rourell; salomo; salomó; salou; sant jaume dels domenys; sant salvador; santa coloma de queral; santa oliva; sarra; savalla del comtat; savallà del comtat; secuita; selva del camp; senan; siurana; solivella; tarragona; torre de fontaubella; torredembarra; torroja del priorat; ulldemolins; vallclara; vallfogona de riucorb; vallmoll; valls; vandellos; vandellòs; vendrell; vespella de gaia; vespella de gaià; vilabella; vilallonga del camp; vilanova de prades; vilanova d'escornalbou; vilaplana; vila-rodona; vila-seca; vilaverd; vilella alta; vilella baixa; vimbodi i poblet; vimbodí i poblet; vinyols i els arcs

6. Pyren: abella de la conca; alas i cerc; alàs i cerc; alins; alt aneu; alt àneu; argelaguer; arseguel; arsèguet; avia; avia; бага; bagà; baix pallars; bassella; bellver de cerdanya; berga; besalu; besalú; beuda; bolvir; borreda;

8. tLlei: ager; àger; agramunt; aïtona; alamus; alamús; albagés; albagès; albatàrrec; albatàrrec; albesa; albi; alcanu; alcan; alcarras; alcarràs; alcoletge; alfarras; alfarràs; alfes; alfé; algerri; alguaire; almacelles; almatret; almenar; alos de balaguer; alòs de balaguer; alpicat; anglesola; arbeca; artesa de lleida; artesa de segre; aspa; avellanes i santa linya; balaguer; barbens; baronia de rialb; belianes; bellaguarda; bellcaire d'urgell; bell-lloc d'urgell; bellmunt d'urgell; bellpuig; bellvis; bellví; benavent de segria; benavent de segrià; biosca; borges blanques; bovera; cabanabona; camarasa; castelldans; castellnou de seana; castello de farfanya; castelló de farfanya; castellersa; castellersà; cervera; cervia de les garrigues; cervià de les garrigues; ciutadilla; cogul; corbins; cubells; espluga calba; estaras; estaràs; floresta; fondarella; foradada; fuliola; fulleda; gimenells i el pla de la font; golmes; gormés; granadella; granja d'escarp; granyanella; granyena de les garrigues; granyena de segarra; guimera; guimerà; guissona; ivars de noguera; ivars d'urgell; ivorra; juncosa; juneda; linyola; llardecans; lleida; maials; malda; maldà; massalcoreig; massoteres; menarguens; menàrguens; miralcamp; mollerussa; montgai; montoliu de lleida; montoliu de segarra; montornes de segarra; montornès de segarra; nalec; oliola; oluges; omellons; os de balaguer; osso de sio; ossó de sió; palau d'anglesola; penelles; plans de sio; plans de sió; poal; pobla de cervoles; pobla de cérvoles; ponts; portella; preixana; preixens; puiggròs; puiggròs; puigverd d'agramunt; puigverd de lleida; ribera d'ondara; rossello; rosselló; sanauja; sanaüja; sant guim de freixenet; sant guim de la plana; sant marti de riucorb; sant martí de riucorb; sant ramon; sarroca de lleida; sentiú de sio; sentiú de sió; seros; seròs; sidamon; soleras; soleràs; soses; sudanell; sunyer; talavera; tarrega; tàrrega; tarres; tarrés; tarroja de segarra; termens; térmens; tiurana; tora; torà; torms; tornabous; torrebesses; torrefarrera; torrefeta i florejac; torregrossa; torrelameu; torres de segre; torre-serona; vallbona de les monges; vallfogona de balaguer; verdu; verdú; vilagrassa; vilanova de bellpuig; vilanova de la barca; vilanova de l'aguda; vilanova de meia; vilanova de meia; vilanova de segria; vilanova de segrià; vila-sana; vilosell; vinaixa

1. Food and Wine: allioli; almond; alta anoa chick peas; anchovies; appetizer; apple; artichokes; asparagus; aubergines; bacon; baguettes; banana; bananas; bbq; beef; beer; beers; berries; beverages; biscuits; bocadillo; bocadillos; botifarra; bread with tomato; breads; broiled onions; bufet potatoes; buffet; bunyols; burgers;

burnt cream; butifarra; butifarra catalana; butter; cafe; café; cafés; calcotada; calçotada; calcotades; calcots; calçots; candy; carles gaig; carme ruscalleda; carquinyolis; carxofes; castellfollit beans; catalan cream; cava; caves codorniu; caves freixenet; cervesa; cerveza; champagne; cheese; cheeses; chef; chicken; chickens; chocolate; chocolates; churro; churros; cider; cigronets de l'alta anòia; cinnamon; coca de llardons; coca de pinyons; coca de sant joan; coconut; cod; codorniu; coffee; cola; cold meat platter; cooked; cookery; cooking; coques de cireres; crema catalana; crema cremada; creme brulee; crepe; crepes; crisps; croissant; croissants; croquettes; cuisine; culinary; cured ham; curry; delicious; donut; donuts; eateries; eggplant; eggs; enologic; enology; enotourism; escalivada; escudella; espinacs; estrella damm; estrella michelin; fanta; favetes; ferran adria; ferran adrià; fideua; fideuà; fira de les garrigues; fira de l'oli; fish; fish and chips; fish dishes; foods; freginat; freixenet; fresh fish; fresh food; fresh fruit; fresh vegetables; fries; fruit; fruit juice; fruits; fruits secs; game dishes; ganxet beans; garlic; garlic bread; gastronomic; gastronomy; gazpacho; gingerbread; gourmet; grape; grapes; groceries; guinness; hazelnut; italian restaurant; jacket potatoes; jamon; jamón; jamon serrano; joan roca; juices; kebab; kfc; kiwi; lamb; llonganissa; lobsters; local dishes; local food; local gastronomy; longaniza; mandonguilles; mcdonald; meat; meatballs; menjar blanc; menu; michelin star; michelin stars; milk shake; milk shakes; milkshake; mixed stew; mongeta del ganxet; mongetes de castellfollit; moscatel; moscatell; mountain cuisine; mullet; mullets; mushroom; mushrooms; nutella; octopus; oenologic; oenological; oenology; oenotourism; olive; olive oil; olives; olla barrejada; omelette; onion; onions; oranges; pa amb tomaca; pa amb tomaquet; pa amb tomàquet; paella; panellets; pasta; pastisset; pastissets; pastries; pastry; patatas; patatas braves; patates braves; patates del bufet; paupiettes; peanut; peanut butter; pepper; peppers; pineapple; pizza; pollo; pork; potato tortilla; potatoes; pudding; queso; queso manchego; rice; roasted tomatoes; romesco; rovellons; salad; salads; salami; salmon; salt fish; samfaina; sandwich; sangria ; sangrias; santi santamaria; sardines; sarsuela; sauce; sausages; sea cooking; seafood; sergi arola; serrano; serrano ham; sheep meat; shellfish; sherry; smoothies; snails; spaguetti; spicy; spinach; squid; stew; strawberries; strawberry; sushi; sweets; tapa; tapas; tasty; tomato; tomato bread; torres wine; torro; torró; torrons; tortell; tortilla; tortilla de patata; tortilla de patatas; tortillas; traditional food; trinxat; vegetable; vegetables; vendimia; verema; vinegar; vines; vineyard; vineyards; vino; waffle; waffles; wine; wine cellar; wine cellars; wine cooperative; wineries; winery; wines; xato; xató; xatonada; yoghurt.

2. Intangible Heritage: accordionists gathering; aplec; aplec del cargol; aquelarre; balls parlats; belly dancing; bonfires; bull fighting; bullfight; bullfighting; bullfights; bullring; carnaval; carnival; castellers; castells; cercavila; correbou; correbous; correfoc; correfocs; costume; costumes; crucifixion; dames i vells; dance of death; dansa d'arenys; death dance; dwarfs; escaldarium; escaldàrium; fairs; feast; feast of saint john; feasts; feria; feria de abril; festa de sant joan; festa del porc i la cervesa; festa major; festes del segar i del batre; festive; festivities; fiesta mayor; fira; fira de la castanya; fira del teatre; fire work; fire works; firecrackers; firework; fireworks; flamenco; folk dances; folk traditions; folklore; giants; guitarist; guitars; herbal remedies; holy week; human pyramid; human pyramids; human tower; human towers; indianos; intangible culture; intangible heritage; la merce; la mercè; matador; matadors; medieval week; moixiganga; parade; passion play; passion plays; pastorets; patum; popular culture; popular dances; popular devotion; popular devotions; popular tradition; popular traditions; revetlla de sant joan; saint george; saint george's day; saint john; sant joan day; sant joan's day; sant jordi; sant jordi day; sant jordi's day; sardana; sardanista; semana santa; setmana medieval; setmana santa; sheepdog trial; siesta; siestas; solc festival; street drama; tarraco viva; tàrraco viva; trabucaires; traditions; tres tombs; tronada.

3. Leisure and Recreation: absinth; alcohol; alcoholic drink; alcoholic drinks; amusement places; aqualeon; aquarium; aquopolis; arabic bath; arabic baths; auditori; auditorium; ballet; balneari; bar; bars; bartender; bingo; black jack; booze; brandy; buskers; busking; casino; choir; chupito; chupitos; cinema; circus; club; clubbing; clubs; cocktail; cocktails; concert; concerts; dance; danced; dancers; dancing; disco; discos; discoteca; discotheque; drama; dramas; drinking; drugs; drums; drunk; drunken; drunks; espectacle; spectacles; evening party; extravaganza; festa; festival; festivals; fiesta; film; folk festival; hangover; happy hour; happy hours; hen party; hungover; imax; imax port vell; jazz festival; jewish bath; jewish baths; leisure; liquor; massage; massages; mojito; mojitos; movie; music ; music band; music festival; music festivals; musica; musical; musician; musicians; nap; night club; night life; nightclub; nightclubs; nightlife; opera; orchestra; party; partying; performance; performances; performer; performers; porn; port aventura; portaventura; primavera sound; pub; pubs; randy; razzmatazz; recover; recovered; recreation; recreational activities; relax; relaxation; relaxed; relaxing; rhythm of the night; rock concert; rock festival; rock music; roller coaster; roman bath; roman baths; sex; sauna; singer; sonar; spa; spas; spectacle; spectacles; spirits; stag party; teatre; teatre grec; teatre nacional; tequila; termes; terrace; terraces; thalassotherapy; theater; theaters; theatre; theatres; theme park; thermal; thermalia; thermalism; tibidabo; tipsy; violin; vodka; water park; wellness; went dancing; whiskey; zoo.

4. Nature and active tourism: action tourism; active tourism; adventure races; adventure sports; agricultural; agriculture; aiguamolls; aigüestortes; aigüestortes; almond tree; almond trees; alpine; animals; apple tree; apple trees; baiau; ballooning; beech; beech wood; biosphere; bird; birds; birdwatching; boar; boavi plain; botanical; bushes; butterfly; cactus; cami de ronda; camí de ronda; camí dels bons homes; camí romeu; canoeing; cap de creus; cardo sierra; carros de foc; cascade; caves; caving; cliffs; climbers; climbing; climbing routes; collserola; cooperativa; countryside; crag; crags; crater; deer; delta; delta de l'ebre; delta nature reserve; downriver; eagles; ebre; ebre delta; ebro delta; ecological; ecology; ecomuseu; environment; environmental; estany de sant maurici; evergreen oak; evergreen oaks; fageda; fageda d'en jorda; fageda d'en jordà; farmer; farmers; farmhouse; farming; fauna; flamingo; flamingos; flora ; flour mill; flowers; flying sports; footpaths; forest; forests; free flying; garraf hills; geographic relief; glaciers; gorge; green way; green ways; greenery; grove; groves; hazelnut trees; hike; hiking; hillside; hillsides; hilltop; hilly; hinterland; horse trekking; horseback; horse-riding; illes medes; izard; jaunt; lacustrine; lagoons; lake; lakes; landscape; landscapes; les agudes; marimurtra; marine reserve; marsh; massif; matagalls; matarranya; meadow; migrating birds; mirador; moixeró crossing; moixeró crossing; moixina; montnegre; montsant; montseny; mountain; mountain bike; mountain biking; mountain refuge; mountain-biking; mountaineering; mountainous; mountains; mountainside; muntanyes de prades; national park; natural; natural interest; natural park; nature; nature area; nature reserve; nature routes; nature sports; nature trails; new park; noarre cirque; oak; olive trees; outdoor activities; outdoor activity; panorama; panoramic; panta de siurana; pantà de siurana; parc natural; parc nou; pedraforca; peyes altes; pica d'estats; pinnacles; pla de beret; pla de la calma; plants; prades mountains; protected area; protected areas; rafters; rafting; rambling; reserva natural del delta; reservoir; riverbank; riverbanks; rivers; rock formations; rural; salnitre cave; scenery; serralada; sheep; sierra; siurana marsh; snow drifts; sparrow; steep cliffs; strolling; strolls; tree; trees; trek; trekked; trekking; triathlon; turo de l'home; turó de l'home; uphill; upriver; vall d'aigua; vall d'aneu; vall d'aneu; vall d'arreu; vall de bonabe; vall de bonabé; vall de nuria; vall de núria; vall de sant aniol; vall de santa magdalena; vall del riu corb; vall fosca; valley; valleys; vegetation; via verda; volcanic; volcano; volcanoes; vultures; walkers; wandered around; wandering around; watch paths; waterfall; waterfalls; watermill; wild animals; wildlife; woods.

5. Sports: baqueira; barca; barça; barcelona football club; basketball; bicycle; blaugrana; camp nou; camp nou stadium; championship; championships; estadi olímpic; estadi olímpic; fc barcelona; fcb; fcbarcelona; football; football club; football club barcelona; football cup; football player; football stadium; football team; formula one; futbol; game; golf; golf club; grand prix; hockey; marathon; marxa beret; masella; messi; nou camp; olímpic; olímpic; olímpico; olympic; olympic games; olympic stadium; olympics; palau municipal d'esports; palau sant jordi; play sports; play tennis; played pool; played sports; played tennis; pool game; race; ronaldinho; ski; ski resort; skiing; slalom; soccer; sport; sporting; sports; stadium; stadiums; table tennis; volleyball.

6. Sun, Sea and Sand: beach; beaches; beachfront; beachside; bikini; bikinis; blue sky; bluest skies; boardwalk; boat; boats; cala; cap salou; cape salou; coast; coastal; coastline; costa; cove; coves; diving; fishermen; fishing port; harbor; harbour; ice cream; icecream; ice-cream; jelly fish; lighthouse; mar; marina; marinas; marine; maritime; mediterranean; mediterranean sea; nautical; nudist; ocean; palm tree; palm trees; palmiers; palmtrees; parasol; passeig marítim; platja; playa; port; sail; sailboat; sailboats; sailing; sailors; sand; sandcastle; sandy; scuba diving; scuba-diving; sea; seabed; seafaring; seafont; seas; seaside; seaweed; shallow; ship; ships; shore; shores; snorkel; snorkelling; sol; sun; sunbathe; sunbathing; sunburn; sunburnt; sunglasses; sunlight; sunny; sunscreen; sunshine; suntan; suntanned; surf; surfers; surfing; swam; swim; swimming; swimming pool; swimsuit; tanned; tanning; topless; umbrella pines; underwater; water biking; water skiing; water sports; waterfront; wharf; windsurfing; yatch; yatch club; yatches.

7. Tangible Heritage: agbar; altar; altarpiece; amfiteatre; amphitheater; amphitheatre; antoni soler; apostles; aqueduct; arabic style; arc de bera; arc de berà; arc de triomf; archeologic; archeological; archeological site; archeological sites; arches; architect; architectonic; architects; architectural; architecture; archway; archways; art; art deco; art nouveau; artist; artistic; artists; arts; arts centre; artsy; artwork; artworks; ausias marc; ausiàs marc; barcino; baronia; baroque; basilica; battlefields; bellas artes; bellesguard; benedictine; berà triumphal arch; black madonna; black virgin; bronze age; build; building; buildings; built; caballe; caballé; cabra feixet; cal baro; cal baró; cal teixidor; calatrava; can ballester; can barrera; can brunet; can cabanyes; can gari; can garí; can lleonard; can manent; can modolell; can palauet; can tintorer; can torrent; carolingian; carving; casa amatller; casa batlló; casa batlló; casa benefica; casa benèfica; casa calvet; casa coll; casa cortada; casa de les caputxines; casa de les punxes; casa galceran; casa lleo morera; casa lleó morera; casa mila; casa milà; casa navas; casa navàs; casa quadras; casa serra; casa sivilla; casa sola morales; casa solà morales; casa vicens; casarilh; castell; castell de montjuic; castell de montjuic; castell de pubol; castell de púbol; castell de sant joan; castell dels tres dragons; castellet; castle; castle of pubol; castles; catedral; cathedral; cathedrals; catholic;

catholic church; catholicism; cau ferrat; cave of saint ignatius; cave painting; cave paintings; cccb; celler guell; celler güell; cemetery; centre de cultura contemporania de barcelona; centre de cultura contemporània de barcelona; ceramics; chapel; chapels; christ; church; churches; cistercian route; citadel; civil war; cloister; cloisters; colom statue; colonia guell; colònia güell; columbus; columbus monument; columbus statue; column; columns; comtal; convent; copper mine; countship; courtyard; courtyards; cova de sant ignasi; crafts; creative; creativity; creu de terme; crypt; cubism; cubist; cultura; cultural; cultural centre; cultural tour; culture; cultured; cultures; dali; dalí; design; designed; designs; dome; domenech i montaner; domènech i montaner; egara; els vilars; enric granados; escaladei; escornalbou; esglesia; església; exhibitions; fabrica; facade; façade; facades; factory; finca guell; finca güell; fortifications; fortified; fortified village; fortress; frederic mompou; frescoes; fundacio joan miro; fundació joan miró; fundacio miro; gallery; gardeny; gargallo; gargoyles; gaudi; gaudí; gaudinian; genius; gothic; gothic; graffiti; guell park; heritage; hermitage; hermitage of sant joan; hermitage sant joan; historic; historical; history; hospitalers; houses; iberian citadel; iberian settlement; industrial; industrial tourism; industry; iron route; jacint verdaguer; jesus; joan maragall; joanot martorell; josep carner; josep carreras; josep pla; la moreneta; la pedrera; la suda; larrocha; les teresianes; literature; macba; machines; mare de deu; mare de déu; maria fortune; marià fortune; masia freixa; masponton; masterpiece; masterpieces; mausoleum; mediaeval; medieval; merce rodoreda; mercè rodoreda; middle age; middle ages; mies van der rohe; mila house; mila i fontanals; milà i fontanals; miners; mining; mining tradition; mirador de colom; miro; miró; mnac; modern style; modernism; modernisme; modernist; modernist style; modernista; modernistic style; monasteries; monastery; monestir; monestir de poblet; monk; monks; montjuic; montjuïc; montjuic castle; monument; monument to columbus; monumental; monuments; moorish; mosaic; mosaics; mosque; muralla; murallat; museu; museu d'art; museum; museums; narcis oller; narcís oller; necropolis; neoclassical; nonell; orwell; paeria; painted; painting; paintings; palace; palaces; palau; palau albeniz; palau albéniz; palau de la generalitat; palau de la musica; palau de la música; palau de la virreina; palau de l'agricultura; palau del mar; palau episcopal; palau guell; palau güell; palau marc; palau nacional; palau reial; parc guell; parc güell; parc sama; parc samà; park güell; parlament; paths of memory; patio; pau casals; pavilion; peace route; pedrera; penitents; picasso; pilgrimage; pilgrims; pillar; pillars; poblet; pont del diable; port lligat; portlligat; pottery; prehistoric; pubol castle; púbol castle; puig i cadafalch; ramon llull; ramon muntaner; ramparts; rebuilt; religious tradition; renaissance; roman; roman circus; roman villa; romanesque; romans; ruins; ruta del cister; sacred; sacred family; sagrada familia; sagrada família; sagrat cor; sanctuary; sant joan castle; santa maria del mar; santes creus; scaffolding; sculpted; sculpture; sculptures; seu vella; shrine; statue; statues; steeples; stone age; synagogue; tapies; tàpies; tarraco; tàrraco; templars; temple; tete montoliu; tomb; tombs; torre; torre agbar; torre barona; torre dels escipions; torre roja; torrelluc; tower; tower of the scipios; towers; triumph; triumph arch; unfinished cathedral; unfinished church; vallbona de les monges; vallparadis; vallparadís; vaults; via augusta; viaduct; viaducts; virgin mary; virolai; viscount; walls; war; world heritage; xerta lock.

8. Urban environment: ajuntament; alleys; avinguda diagonal; barceloneta; barri antic; barri gothic; barri gòtic; barri vell; bookstore; boqueria; boqueria market; botanic garden; bought; boulevard; boulevards; boutique; boutiques; bridge; buying; carmel; carrer ample; carrer major; city center; city centre; city hall; city tour; cityscape; citytour; ciutadella park; commercial; corte ingles; corte inglés; cruise; cruise ship; cruised; cruising; dealers; department store; diagonal; district; downtown; drassanes; duana nova; eixample; el born; el poblenou; estacio de franca; estació de frança; estacio del nord; estació del nord; fnac; fountain; fountains; francolí; francolí; funicular; funicular de sant joan; funicular of sant joan; funicular to sant joan; funiculars; garden; gardens; gothic district; gothic quarter; gracia; gràcia; green areas; horta; hospital de sant pau; imperial tarraco; imperial tàrraco; jardí botanic; jardí botànic; jewish district; jewish quarter; la llibertat; laneways; les corts; liceu; llobregat; llotja; luminous fountains; magic fountain; main square; mare magnum; maremagnum; market; market town; marketplace; markets; medieval quarter; mercado; mercat de la boqueria; mercat de les flors; metro; metropolis; moll de la fusta; montaner; montjuic fountain; montjuïc fountain; montjuic fountains; montjuïc fountains; narrow streets; neighbourhood; old city; old quarter; olympic village; onyar; onyar river; outlet; parc; parc de la ciutadella; parc forestal; parque; part alta; part vella; passeig; passeig arqueologic; passeig arqueològic; passeig de gracia; passeig de gràcia; pedralbes; placa; plaça; placa catalunya; plaça catalunya; placa de catalunya; placa de catalunya; placa de sant jaume; placa de sant jaume; placa d'espànya; placa d'espànya; placa imperial; placa imperial; placa reial; placa reial; placa sant jaume; placa sant jaume; plaza; plazas; poble espanyol; poble sec; port vell; porxos d'en xifre; porxos d'en xifré; purchase; purchased; purchasing; rambla; rambla nova; rambla vella; ramblas; rambles; raval; sales; sant joan funicular; sant joan station; sarria; sarrià; selling; sells; serrallo; shop; shopped; shopping; shops; sightseeing; skyline; sold; stores; streets; streetscape; suburb; suburbs; teatre del liceu; thoroughfare; torre de collserola; town council; tram; tramway; underground; urban; vallvidrera; vila olimpica; vila olímpica; vila vella; zara.

B.3. Thirty-one specific attraction factors:

1.1 Food and Drinks: allioli; almond; alta anoia chick peas; anchovies; appetizer; apple; artichokes; asparagus; aubergines; bacon; baguettes; banana; bananas; bbq; beef; beer; beers; berries; beverages; biscuits; bocadillo; bocadillos; botifarra; bread with tomato; breads; broiled onions; bufet potatoes; buffet; bunyols; burgers; burnt cream; butifarra; butifarra catalana; butter; cafe; café; cafés; calcotada; calçotada; calcotades; calcots; calçots; candy; carles gaig; carme ruscalleda; carquinyolis; carxofes; castellfolit beans; catalan cream; cervesa; cerveza; cheese; cheeses; chef; chicken; chickens; chocolate; chocolates; churro; churros; cider; cigronets de l'alta anoia; cinnamon; coca de llardons; coca de pinyons; coca de sant joan; coconut; cod; coffee; cola; cold meat platter; cooked; cookery; cooking; coques de cireres; crema catalana; crema cremada; creme brulee; crepe; crepes; crisps; croissant; croissants; croquettes; cuisine; culinary; cured ham; curry; delicious; donut; donuts; eateries; eggplant; eggs; escalivada; escudella; espinacs; estrella damm; estrella michelin; fanta; favetes; ferran adria; ferran adrià; fideua; fideuà; fira de les garrigues; fira de l'oli; fish; fish and chips; fish dishes; foods; freginat; fresh fish; fresh food; fresh fruit; fresh vegetables; fries; fruit; fruit juice; fruits; fruits secs; game dishes; ganxet beans; garlic; garlic bread; gastronomic; gastronomy; gazpacho; gingerbread; gourmet; grape; grapes; groceries; guinness; hazelnut; italian restaurant; jacket potatoes; jamon; jamón; jamon serrano; joan roca; juices; kebab; kfc; kiwi; lamb; llonganissa; lobsters; local dishes; local food; local gastronomy; longaniza; mandonguilles; mcdonald; meat; meatballs; menjar blanc; menu; michelin star; michelin stars; milk shake; milk shakes; milkshake; mixed stew; mongeta del ganxet; mongetes de castellfolit; mountain cuisine; mullet; mullets; mushroom; mushrooms; nutella; octopus; olive; olive oil; olives; olla barrejada; omelette; onion; onions; oranges; pa amb tomaca; pa amb tomaquet; pa amb tomàquet; paella; panelllets; pasta; pastisset; pastissets; pastries; pastry; patatas; patatas braves; patates braves; patates del bufet; paupiettes; peanut; peanut butter; pepper; peppers; pineapple; pizza; pollo; pork; potato tortilla; potatoes; pudding; queso; queso manchego; rice; roasted tomatoes; romesco; rovellons; salad; salads; salami; salmon; salt fish; samfaina; sandwich; sangria; sangrias; santi santamaria; sardines; sarsuela; sauce; sausages; sea cooking; seafood; sergi arola; serrano; serrano ham; sheep meat; shellfish; sherry; smoothies; snails; spaguetti; spicy; spinach; squid; stew; strawberries; strawberry; sushi; sweets; tapa; tapas; tasty; tomato; tomato; tomato bread; torro; torró; torróns; tortell; tortilla; tortilla de patata; tortilla de patatas; tortillas; traditional food; trinxat; vegetable; vegetables; waffle; waffles; xato; xató; xatonada; yoghurt

1.2 Wine: cava; caves codorniu; caves freixenet; champagne; codorniu; enologic; enology; enotourism; freixenet; moscatel; moscatell; oenologic; oenological; oenology; oenotourism; torres wine; vendimia; verema; vinegar; vines; vineyard; vineyards; vino; wine; wine cellar; wine cellars; wine cooperative; wineries; winery; wines

2. Intangible heritage: accordionists gathering; aplec; aplec del cargol; aquelarre; balls parlats; belly dancing; bonfires; bull fighting; bullfight; bullfighting; bullfights; bullring; carnaval; carnival; castellers; castells; cercavila; correbou; correbous; correfoc; correfocs; costume; costumes; crucifixion; dames i vells; dance of death; dansa d'arenys; death dance; dwarfs; escaldarium; escaldàrium; fairs; feast; feast of saint john; feasts; feria; feria de abril; festa de sant joan; festa del porc i la cervesa; festa major; festes del segar i del batre; festive; festivities; fiesta mayor; fira; fira de la castanya; fira del teatre; fire work; fire works; firecrackers; firework; fireworks; flamenco; folk dances; folk traditions; folklore; giants; guitarist; guitars; herbal remedies; holy week; human pyramid; human pyramids; human tower; human towers; indianos; intangible culture; intangible heritage; la merce; la mercè; matador; matadors; medieval week; moixiganga; parade; passion play; passion plays; pastorets; patum; popular culture; popular dances; popular devotion; popular devotions; popular tradition; popular traditions; revetlla de sant joan; saint george; saint george's day; saint john; sant joan day; sant joan's day; sant jordi; sant jordi day; sant jordi's day; sardana; sardanista; semana santa; setmana medieval; setmana santa; sheepdog trial; siesta; siestas; solc festival; street drama; tarraco viva; tàrraco viva; trabucaires; traditions; tres tombs; tronada

3.1 Nightlife & partying: absinth; alcohol; alcoholic drink; alcoholic drinks; amusement places; bar; bars; bartender; bingo; black jack; booze; brandy; casino; chupito; chupitos; club; clubbing; clubs; cocktail; cocktails; dancing; disco; discos; discoteca; discotheque; drinking; drugs; drunk; drunken; drunks; evening party; festa; fiesta; hangover; happy hour; happy hours; hen party; hungover; liquor; mojito; mojitos; night club; night life; nightclub; nightclubs; nightlife; party; partying; porn; pub; pubs; randy; razzmatazz; rhythm of the night; sex; spirits; stag party; tequila; tipsy; vodka; went dancing; whiskey

3.2 Theme Parks: aqualeon; aquarium; aquopolis; port aventura; portaventura; roller coaster; theme park; tibidabo; water park; zoo

3.3 Wellness: arabic bath; arabic baths; balneari; jewish bath; jewish baths; massage; massages; nap; recover; recovered; relax; relaxation; relaxed; relaxing; roman bath; roman baths; sauna; spa; spas; termes; thalassotherapy; thermal; thermalia; thermalism; wellness

3.4 Theatre/spectacle/cinema/music: auditori; auditorium; ballet; buskers; busking; choir; cinema; circus; concert; concerts; dance; danced; dancers; drama; dramas; drums; espectacle; espectacles; extravaganza; festival; festivals; film; folk festival; imax; imax port vell; jazz festival; mercat de musica viva; mercat de música viva; movie; music ; music band; music festival; music festivals; musica; musical; musician; musicians; opera; orchestra; performance; performances; performer; performers; primavera sound; rock concert; rock festival; rock music; singer; sonar; spectacle; spectacles; teatre; teatre grec; teatre nacional; theater; theaters; theatre; theatres; violin

3.5 Leisure remaining words: leisure; recreation; recreational activities; terrace; terraces

4.1 Nature elements and places: aiguamolls; aigüestortes; aigüestortes; alpine; animals; baiu; beech; beech wood; biosphere; bird; birds; boar; boavi plain; botanical; bushes; butterfly; cactus; cap de creus; cardo sierra; cascade; caves; cliffs; collserola; crag; crags; crater; deer; delta; delta de l'ebre; delta nature reserve; downriver; eagles; ebre; ebre delta; ebro delta; estany de sant maurici; evergreen oak; evergreen oaks; fageda; fageda d'en jorda; fageda d'en jordà; fauna; flamingo; flamingos; flora ; flowers; footpaths; forest; forests; garraf hills; glaciers; gorge; greenery; grove; groves; hillside; hillsides; hilltop; hilly; hinterland; illes medes; izard; lacustrine; lagoons; lake; lakes; les agudes; marimurtra; marine reserve; marsh; massif; matagalls; matarranya; meadow; migrating birds; moixero crossing; moixeró crossing; moixina; montnegre; montsant; montseny; mountain; mountainous; mountains; mountainside; muntanyes de prades; national park; natural park; nature area; nature reserve; new park; noarre cirque; oak; panta de siurana; pantà de siurana; parc natural; parc nou; pedraforca; peyes altes; pica d'estats; pinnacles; pla de beret; pla de la calma; plants; prades mountains; protected area; protected areas; reserva natural del delta; reservoir; riverbank; riverbanks; rivers; rock formations; salnitre cave; serralada; sierra; siurana marsh; snow drifts; sparrow; steep cliffs; tree; trees; turo de l'home; turó de l'home; uphill; upriver; vall d'aigua; vall d'aneu; vall d'àneu; vall d'arreu; vall de bonabe; vall de bonabé; vall de nuria; vall de núria; vall de sant aniol; vall de santa magdalena; vall del riu corb; vall fosca; valley; valleys; vegetation; volcanic; volcano; volcanoes; vultures; waterfall; waterfalls; wild animals; wildlife; woods

4.2 Nature sports & active tourism: action tourism; active tourism; adventure races; adventure sports; ballooning; birdwatching; camí de ronda; camí de ronda; camí dels bons homes; camí romeu; canoeing; carros de foc; caving; climbers; climbing; climbing routes; flying sports; free flying; green way; green ways; hike; hiking; horse trekking; horseback; horse-riding; jaunt; mountain bike; mountain biking; mountain refuge; mountain-biking; mountaineering; nature routes; nature sports; nature trails; outdoor activities; outdoor activity; rafters; rafting; rambling; strolling; strolls; trek; trekked; trekking; triathlon; via verda; walkers; wandered around; wandering around; watch paths

4.3 Rural landscape: agricultural; agriculture; almond tree; almond trees; apple tree; apple trees; cooperativa; countryside; farmer; farmers; farmhouse; farming; flour mill; hazelnut trees; olive trees; rural; sheep; watermill

4.4 Nature remaining words: ecological; ecology; ecomuseu; environment; environmental; geographic relief; landscape; landscapes; mirador; natural; natural interest; nature; panorama; panoramic; scenery

5.1 FC Barcelona: barca; barça; barcelona football club; blaugrana; camp nou; camp nou stadium; fc barcelona; fcb; fcbarcelona; football club barcelona; messi; nou camp; ronaldinho

5.2 Sporting events/watching: basketball; championship; championships; estadi olímpic; estadi olímpic; football; football club; football cup; football player; football stadium; football team; formula one; futbol; game; grand prix; hockey; marathon; olímpic; olímpic; olímpico; olympic; olympic games; olympic stadium; olympics; palau municipal d'esports; palau sant jordi; race; slalom; soccer; stadium; stadiums; volleyball

5.3 Other sports: baqueira; bicycle; golf; golf club; marxa beret; masella; play sports; play tennis; played pool; played sports; played tennis; pool game; ski; ski resort; skiing; sport; sporting; sports; table tennis

6. Sun, Sea and Sand: beach; beaches; beachfront; beachside; bikini; bikinis; blue sky; bluest skies; boardwalk; boat; boats; cala; cap salou; cape salou; coast; coastal; coastline; costa; cove; coves; diving; fishermen; fishing port; harbor; harbour; ice cream; icecream; ice-cream; jelly fish; lighthouse; mar; marina; marinas; marine; maritime; mediterranean; mediterranean sea; nautical; nudist; ocean; palm tree; palm trees; palmiers; palmtrees; parasol; passeig marítim; platja; playa; port; sail; sailboat; sailboats; sailing; sailors; sand; sandcastle; sandy; scuba diving; scuba-diving; sea; seabed; seafaring; seafront; seas; seaside; seaweed; shallow; ship; ships; shore; shores; snorkel; snorkelling; sol; sun; sunbathe; sunbathing; sunburn; sunburnt; sunglasses; sunlight; sunny; sunscreen; sunshine; suntan; suntanned; surf; surfers; surfing; swam; swim; swimming; swimming pool; swimsuit; tanned; tanning; topless; umbrella pines; underwater; water biking; water skiing; water sports; waterfront; wharf; windsurfing; yacht; yacht club; yachts

7.1 Buildings and architecture: agbar; architect; architectonic; architects; architectural; architecture; arches; archway; archways; build; building; buildings; built; cal baro; cal baró; cal teixidor; can ballester; can barrera; can brunet; can cabanyes; can gari; can garí; can leonard; can manent; can modolell; can palauet; can tintorer; can torrent; casa amatller; casa benefica; casa benèfica; casa coll; casa cortada; casa de les caputxines; casa de les punxes; casa galceran; casa lleo morera; casa lleó morera; casa navas; casa navàs; casa quadras; casa serra; casa sivilla; casa sola morales; casa solà morales; casarilh; cau ferrat; column; columns; courtyard; courtyards; dome; facade; façade; facades; gargoyles; houses; masia freixa; mausoleum; mies van der rohe; mosaic; mosaics; paeria; palace; palaces; palau; palau albeniz; palau albéniz; palau de la generalitat; palau de la musica; palau de la música; palau de la virreina; palau de l'agricultura; palau del mar; palau marc; palau nacional; palau reial; parc sama; parc samà; parlament; patio; pavilion; pillar; pillars; rebuilt; scaffolding; torre agbar; torre barona; torre roja; torrelluc; vaults

7.2 Gaudí: bellesguard; casa batllo; casa batlló; casa calvet; casa mila; casa milà; casa vicens; celler guell; celler güell; colonia guell; colònia güell; finca guell; finca güell; gaudi; gaudí; gaudinian; guell park; la pedrera; les teresianes; mila house; palau guell; palau güell; parc guell; parc güell; park güell; pedrera; sacred family; sagrada familia; sagrada família; unfinished cathedral; unfinished church

7.3 Artists: artist; artists; ausias marc; ausiàs marc; caballe; caballé; calatrava; dali; dalí; domenech i montaner; domènech i montaner; genius; frederic mompou; enric granados; jacint verdaguer; joan maragall; joanot martorell; josep carner; josep pla; literature; mila i fontanals; milà i fontanals; miro; miró; orwell; pau casals; picasso; port lligat; portlligat; puig i cadafalch; ramon llull; ramon muntaner; tapies; tàpies; narcis oller; narcís oller; merce rodoreda; mercè rodoreda; antoni soler; larrocha; josep carreras; tete montoliu; marià fortune; maria fortune; nonell; gargallo

7.4 Art, design, art styles: arabic style; art; art deco; art nouveau; artistic; arts; arts centre; artsy; artwork; artworks; baroque; bellas artes; carving; ceramics; crafts; creative; creativity; cubism; cubist; cultural centre; design; designed; designs; exhibitions; frescoes; gallery; gothic; gothic; graffiti; modern style; modernism; modernisme; modernist; modernist style; modernista; modernistic style; moorish; neoclassical; painted; painting; paintings; pottery; renaissance; roman; romanesque

7.5 Museums: castell de pubol; castell de púbol; castle of pubol; cccb; centre de cultura contemporania de barcelona; centre de cultura contemporània de barcelona; fundacio joan miro; fundació joan miró; fundacio miro; macba; mnac; museu; museu d'art; museum; museums; pubol castle; púbol castle

7.6 Archaeological sites: amfiteatre; amphitheater; amphitheatre; aqueduct; arc de bera; arc de berà; archeologic; archeological; archeological site; archeological sites; berà triumphal arch; bronze age; cabra feixet; cave painting; cave paintings; els vilars; iberian citadel; iberian settlement; muralla; murallat; necropolis; prehistoric; pont del diable; ramparts; roman circus; roman villa; romans; ruins; stone age; torre dels escipions; tower of the scipios; via augusta; viaduct; viaducts; walls

7.7 History/industrial: barcino; battlefields; carolingian; civil war; comtal; copper mine; countship; egara; fabrica; factory; historic; historical; history; hospitalers; industrial; industrial tourism; industry; iron route; machines; mediaeval; medieval; middle age; middle ages; miners; mining; mining tradition; paths of memory; peace route; tarraco; tàrraco; templars; viscount; war

7.8 Military/castles: castell; castell de montjuic; castell de montjuïc; castell de sant joan; castell dels tres dragons; castellet; castle; castles; citadel; escornalbou; fortifications; fortified; fortified village; fortress; gardeny; la suda; maspontons; montjuic; montjuïc; montjuic castle; sant joan castle; torre; tower; towers; vallparadis; vallparadís; xerta lock

7.9 Monuments/sculptures: arc de triomf; colom statue; columbus; columbus monument; columbus statue; creu de terme; mirador de colom; monument; monument to columbus; monumental; monuments; sculpted; sculpture; sculptures; statue; statues; triomf; triumph; triumph arch

7.10 Religious heritage: altar; altarpiece; apostles; baronia; basilica; benedictine; black madonna; black virgin; catedral; cathedral; cathedrals; catholic; catholic church; catholicism; cave of saint ignatius; cemetery; chapel; chapels; christ; church; churches; cistercian route; cloister; cloisters; convent; cova de sant ignasi; crypt; escaladei; esglesia; església; hermitage; hermitage of sant joan; hermitage sant joan; jesús; la moreneta; mare de deu; mare de déu; monasteries; monastery; monestir; monestir de poblet; monk; monks; mosque; palau episcopal; penitents; pilgrimage; pilgrims; poblet; religious tradition; ruta del cister; sacred; sagrat cor; sanctuary; santa maria del mar; santes creus; seu vella; shrine; steeples; synagogue; temple; tomb; tombs; vallbona de les monges; virgin mary; virolai

7.11 Culture remaining words: cultura; cultural; cultural tour; culture; cultured; cultures; heritage; masterpiece; masterpieces; world heritage

8.1 Shopping: bookstore; bought; boutique; boutiques; buying; commercial; corte ingles; corte inglés; dealers; department store; fnac; outlet; purchase; purchased; purchasing; sales; selling; sells; shop; shopped; shopping; shops; sold; stores; zara

8.2 Barcelona attractions: avinguda diagonal; barceloneta; barri gotic; barri gòtic; boqueria; boqueria market; carmel; ciutadella park; diagonal; drassanes; duana nova; eixample; el born; el poblenou; estacio de franca; estació de França; estacio del nord; estació del nord; gothic district; gothic quarter; gracia; gràcia; horta; hospital de sant pau; les corts; liceu; llobregat; luminous fountains; magic fountain; mare magnum; maremagnum; mercat de la boqueria; mercat de les flors; metro; moll de la fusta; montaner; montjuic fountain; montjuïc fountain; montjuic fountains; montjuïc fountains; olympic village; parc de la ciutadella; passeig de gracia; passeig de gràcia; pedralbes; placa catalunya; plaça catalunya; placa de catalunya; plaça de catalunya; placa de sant jaume; plaça de sant jaume; placa d'espànya; plaça d'espànya; placa reial; plaça reial; placa sant jaume; plaça sant jaume; poble espanyol; poble sec; port vell; porxos d'en xifre; porxos d'en xifré; ramblas; rambles; raval; sarria; sarrià; teatre del liceu; torre de collserola; tram; tramway; underground; vallvidrera; vila olimpica; vila olímpica

8.3 Other city attractions: francoli; francolí; funicular de sant joan; funicular of sant joan; funicular to sant joan; imperial tarraco; imperial tàrraco; jewish district; jewish quarter; onyar; onyar river; passeig arqueologic; passeig arqueològic; placa imperial; plaça imperial; rambla nova; rambla vella; sant joan funicular; sant joan station; serrallo

8.4 Urban tourism/general sites: ajuntament; alleys; barri antic; barri vell; botanic garden; boulevard; boulevards; bridge; carrer ample; carrer major; city center; city centre; city hall; city tour; cityscape; citytour; cruise; cruise ship; cruised; cruising; district; downtown; fountain; fountains; funicular; funiculars; garden; gardens; green areas; jardi botanic; jardí botànic; la llibertat; laneways; llotja; main square; market; market town; marketplace; markets; medieval quarter; mercado; metropolis; narrow streets; neighbourhood; old city; old quarter; parc; parc forestal; parque; part alta; part vella; passeig; placa; plaça; plaza; plazas; rambla; sightseeing; skyline; streets; streetscape; suburb; suburbs; thoroughfare; town council; urban; vila vella

B.4. Feelings and dichotomies keywords:

1. Good feelings: agreeable; amazing; amiable; amused; awesome; beautiful; beauty; brave; breathtaking; brilliant; charming; cheerful; clean; colorful; colourful; comfortable; comfy; cool; cooperative; courageous; cute; delighted; delightful; eager; elated; enchanting; encouraging; energetic; enthusiastic; excellent; excited; exquisite; exuberant; fabulous; faithful; famous; fantastic; fascinating; favorite; favourite; fine; freedom; friendly; fun; funniest; funny; gentle; glad; glorious; good; good choice; good impression; good life; gorgeous; great; happy; healthy; heavenly; helpful; hilarious; honourable; impressed; impressive; interesting; jolly; joyous; lively; love; lovely; luckily; lucky; magic; magnificent; marvel; marvellous; marvelous; nice; passion; perfect; pleasant; pretty; relieved; rich; safe; silly; smiling; spectacular; splendid; successful; thankful; thoughtful; tidy; very kind; victorious; vivacious; warm welcome; witty; wonderful; worth; zany; zealous.

2. Bad feelings: angry; annoyed; annoying; anxious; arrogant; ashamed; awful; awkward; bad; bad atmosphere; bad choice; bad impression; bewildered; bizarre; bored; bummer; clumsy; combative; condemned; confused; crappy; crazy; creepy; cruel; dangerous; death; defeated; defiant; depressed; dirty; disappointment; disappointed; disappointing; disaster; disastrous; disgusted; disturbed; dizzy; dull; embarrassed; envious; evil; exhausted; fierce; flipped-out; foolish; frantic; freaky; frightened; frustration; got lost; grieving; grumpy; hard time; helpless; home sick; homeless; homesick; horror; hospital; hungry; hurt; ill; itchy; jealous; jittery; lazy; lonely; lost; mediocre; mysterious; nasty; naughty; nervous; nightmare; not friendly; not fun; not good; not great; not happy; not interesting; not nice; not perfect; not so friendly; not so good; not so happy; not so interesting; not so nice; not very good; not very happy; not very nice; not worth; nutty; obnoxious; odd; outrageous; panicky; pathetic; poor; problem; problems; repulsive; ridiculous; sad; scary; selfish; sick; sore; stinky; strange; stupid; tense; terrible; testy; thoughtless; tired; troubled; uncomfortable; unfortunate; unfortunately; unhappy; unsafe; upset; uptight; weary; weird; wicked; worried; worse; wrong.

3. Love: admire; admired; adorable; adored; charmed by; cherish; cherished; desire; fancy; fancied; fond of; in love with; infatuated by; liked; love; loved; loving; romantic.

4. Hate: abhor; abhorred; abominate; averse to; can't bear; can't stand; deplore; deplored; despise; despised; detest; detested; dislike; disliked; execrate; execrated; hate; hated; hateful; hostile to; infamous; intolerable; loathe; loathed; object to; odious; recoil from; resent; resented; revolted by; scorn; shudder.

5. Beautiful: admirable; alluring; appealing; attractive; beautiful; beauty; charm; charming; comely; cute; exquisite; good-looking; gorgeous; handsome; heavenly; incomparable; lovely; magnificent; marvellous; picturesque; radiant; spectacular; splendid; superb; unequalled; wonderful.

6. Ugly: abominable; awful-looking; bad-featured; debased; degenerate; depraved; despicable; detestable; disagreeable; dreadful-looking; evil; execrable; frightful-looking; ghastly; grotesque; gruesome; heinous; hideous; horrible-looking; ill-favoured; immoral; loathsome; mephitic; monstrous-looking; nasty; nauseating; nauseous; noisome; objectionable; obnoxious; offensive; perverted; plain-featured; plain-looking; repugnant; repulsive; repulsive-looking; revolting; rotten; sickening; sordid; terrible-looking; ugly ; unattractive; unlovely; unprepossessing; unsightly; vile.

7. Pleasant: agreeable; appropriate; cosy; cozy; delectable; delicious; delightful; euphonious; fitting; gentle; gratifying; mellifluous; melodic; palatable; pleasant; pleasantly; pleasing; pleasurable; satisfying; savoury; toothsome.

8. Unpleasant: acerbic; acrid; afflictive; beastly; blistered; disgusting; dreadful; embarrassing; forbidding; god-awful; grim; hellish; mortifying; painful; rebarbative; repellent; repellent; sharp-worded; sulphurous; ungrateful; unpleasant; virulent; vitriolic; wicked.

9. Friendly: affable; affectionate; amiable; amicable; brotherly; buddy-buddy; chummy; companionable; comradely; congenial; convivial; fraternal; friendly; good-natured; kind-hearted; matey; neighbourly; on good terms; palsy-walsy; simpatico; sisterly; sociable; warm-hearted; well-disposed.

10. Unfriendly: beetle-browed; hostile; inhospitable; inimical; scowling; uncongenial; uncordial; unfriendly; unneighborly; unneighbourly; unsociable.

11. Fun/interesting: amusement; amusing; crazy; diversion; diverting; enjoy; enjoyable; enjoying; enjoyment; exciting; exotic; extraordinary; fun; funniest; funny; interesting; worth seeing.

12. Boring: bored; boring; commomplace; depressing; dull; monotonous; not fun; not interesting; not so interesting; nothing to do; repetitious; repetitive; serious; soporific; tedious; trite; uneventful; unexciting; uninspiring; uninteresting; vapid; wearisome; wordy.

13. Lively: active; agile; alive; animated; astir; bouncy; brisk; buoyant; bustling; cheerful; cheery; chirpy; energetic; eventful; frisky; full of life; glowing; lively; nimble; perky; spirited; sprightly; spry; stimulating; stirring; swarming; teeming; vibrant; vigorous; vivacious; vivid.

14. Gloomy: chap-fallen; cheerless; cloudy; crestfallen; depressed melancholy; despairing; despondent; dim; dismal; dispirited; doleful; downcast; downhearted; dreary; dusky; forlorn; gloomy; glum; inky; joyless; lugubrious; moody; murky; obscure; overcast; shaded; shadowy; shady; sorrowful; sullen.

15. Noisy: blaring; boisterous; booming; busiest; bustle; busy; cacophonous; chattering; clamorous; deafening; discordant; dissonant; earsplitting; harsh; loud; noise; noisy; raucous; resounding; restless; reverberating; rowdy; screaming; screeching; shrieking; shrill; strident; talkative; thunderous; tumultuous; unmusical; uproarious; vociferous.

16. Quiet: calm; isolated; leisurely; lone; lonely; motionless; noiseless; peaceful; placid; quiet; restful; secluded; serene; silent; soundless; tranquil; undisturbed; unfrequented.

17. Empty: deserted; desertic; desolate; empty; nothingness; uninhabited; unladen; unoccupied; unused; void;

18. Full: brimming; bursting; congested; crammed; crowd; crowded; crowds; hordes; jammed; jam-packed; loaded; lots of people; lots of tourists; many tourists; multitude; overflowing; plenty of tourists; stuffed; touristic; touristy; traffic; transit.

19. Orderly: arranged; harmonious; methodical; neat; orderly; organized; regular; shipshape; symmetrical; systematic; systematized; systemized; tidy; well-organized.

20. Chaotic: chaos; chaotic; confused; disordered; disorderly; disorganized; formless; frantically; frenzied; haphazard; hectic; helter-skelter; higgledy-piggledy; incoherent; jumbled; maze; messy; rambling; riotous; topsy-turvy; turbulent; unmethodical; unorganized; unstuck; unsystematic; unsystematised; unsystematised.

21. Clean: antiseptic; clean; decontaminated; disinfected; pure; purified; sanitary; sterile; unadulterated; uncontaminated; undefiled; uninfected; unpolluted; unspoiled; unspoil; unsullied.

22. Dirty: bedraggled; befouled; begrimed; besmeared; besmirched; dirty; dusty; filthy; foul; grimy; grungy; gungy; mucky; polluted; seedy; slatternly; slovenly; smudged; soiled; sooty; squalid; stained; stinky; sullied; unclean; untidy; unwashed.

23. Relax: abatement; alleviation; ease; easing off; easing up; letting up; mitigation; moderation; relax; relaxed; relaxing; remission; repose; rest; slackening.

24. Distress: affliction; agony; angst; anguish; anxiety; depression; desolation; distressed; distressful; distressing; disturbing; grief; heartache; misery; perturbing; sadness; sorrow; stressful; suffering; torment; torture; troubling; unhappiness; unhappy; woe; woefulness; worrisome; worrying; wretchedness.

25. Authentic: authentic; bona fide; certain; genuine; honest; original; real; reliable; true; trustworthy; truthful; unique; veracious.

26. Inauthentic: deceptive; dishonest; distorted; erroneous; fabricated; fake; fallacious; false; faulty; fictitious; flawed; imprecise; inauthentic; kitsch; misleading; not real; spurious; unfactual; untrue.

27. New/Fashionable: advanced; contemporary; fashionable; innovative; modern; new; newer; newfangled; revolutionary; stylish; trendy; up-to-date.

28. Old/old-fashioned: anachronistic; ancient; antediluvian; antiquated; antique; antiques; archaic; backward-looking; bygone; classical; crumbling; decayed; decaying; decrepit; dilapidated; hackeneyed; immemorial; obsolete; old; old fashioned; primitive; quaint; ruined; shabby; stale; time-honoured; time-worn; traditional; unfashionable.

29. Cheap: affordable; bargain; cheap; cheaper; cutprice; discount; inexpensive; low-priced.

30. Expensive: costly; expensive; high-priced; luxury; not affordable; overpriced; pricey.

31. Modest/poor: beggars; guetto; homely; humble; inconspicuous; lowly; miserable; modest; ordinary; plain; poor; simple; tacky; unassuming; unexceptional; unobtrusive; unostentatious; unpretentious.

32. Luxurious/wealthy: classy; de luxe; elegant; epicurean; extravagant; gourmet; lavish; luxurious; opulent; plush; posh; ritz; ritzy; sumptuous; swank; wealth; wealthy.

33. Safe: foolproof; guarded; impregnable; invulnerable; protected; reassuring; safe; secure; secured; shielded;

34. Unsafe: crime; criminal; danger; dangerous; defenceless; defenseless; dodgy; hazardous; helpless; homeless; mugged; perilous; pick pocket; pick pocketed; pick pocketeer; pick pocketers; pick pocketing; pick pockets; pickpocket; pickpocketed; pickpocketers; pickpocketing; prostitutes; risk; risky; robbed; sneak; stealing; stole; stolen; theft; thief; thieves; tiff; unguarded; unprotected; unsafe; vulnerable.

B.5. Cultural identity keywords

- Cultural, linguistic and geographical identity references:

Catalan: catala; català; catalan; catalan culture; catalan dance; catalan identity; catalan language; catalan national; catalan traditions; catalana; catalanes; catalanism; catalanist; catalans; catalonia; catalonian; catalonians; catalunya; dialect; different language; local culture; local identity; local language; local tongue; local traditions; native culture; native language; native tongue; own culture; own language; own tongue; quatre barres; regional identity; segadors

Spanish: castellano; castilian; espana; española; espanol; español; espanola; española; espanolas; españolas; espanoles; españoles; espanya; espanyol; espanyola; ole; olé; spain; spains; spanglish; spaniard; spaniards; spanish; spanish bull; spanish class; spanish culture; spanish dance; spanish lessons; spanish national; spanish school; speak spanish

Mediterranean: mediterranean; mediterranean sea; mediterrani; mediterrania; mediterrània

European: europe; europea; european; europeans; europeu

Global: cosmopolitan; global; international; international community; mexican hat; mexican hats; multicultural; transnational

- Cultural traditions, folklore and dances and music

Festa Major: cercavila; festa major; fiesta mayor; la merce; la mercè; local festivities

Rural/Farming festivities: festa del porc i la cervesa; festes del segar i del batre; fira de la castanya; medieval week; setmana medieval; sheepdog trial; tres tombs

Aplec: aplec; aplec del cargol

Patum: patum

Fira del teatre: fira del teatre

Tarraco viva: tarraco viva; tàrraco viva

Religious traditions: crucifixion; holy week; nativity; passion play; passion plays; pastorets; procession; religious tradition; semana santa; setmana santa

Sant Joan: feast of saint john; festa de sant joan; revetlla de sant joan; saint john; sant joan day; sant joan's day

Sant Jordi: saint george; saint george's day; sant jordi; sant jordi day; sant jordi's day

Castanyada: castanyada

Saint Valentine: saint valentine; saint valentines; valentine's

Halloween: halloween

Carnival: carnaval; carnival; costume; costumes; disguise; disguised; parade; parades

Feria de abril: feria de abril

Castellers: castellers; castells; human pyramid; human pyramids; human tower; human towers; moixiganga

Correbou: correbou; correbous

Giants and Dwarfs: dwarfs; gegants; giants; nanos

Correfoc: aquelarre; bonfires; correfoc; correfocs; escaldarium; escaldàrium

Fireworks: fire work; fire works; firecrackers; firework; fireworks; tronada

Siesta: siesta; siestas

Bullfighting: bull fight; bull fighting; bullfight; bullfighting; bullfights; bullring; corrida; corridas; matador; matadors; toro; toros

Sardana: cobla; gralla; sardana; sardanista

Traditional Catalan dances: ball de bastons; balls parlats; dames i vells; dansa d'arenys; death dance; solc festival

Accordionists: accordionists; accordionists gathering

Flamenco: cantaor; cantaora; castanuelas; castañuelas; flamenco; pandereta; panderetas; tablao; tablaos

Spanish Guitar: guitar; guitarist; guitars; spanish guitar

Ballet: ballet

Belly dancing: belly dancing

Salsa: salsa; tango

- Cuisine and drinks

Bread with tomato: bread with tomato; pa amb tomaca; pa amb tomaquet; pa amb tomàquet; tomato bread; tomato toast

Olive oil: olive; olive oil; olives

Seafood and fish: anchovies; calamari; cod; fish; fish dishes; fresh fish; lobster; lobsters; mullet; mullets; mussels; octopus; prawns; salt fish; sardines; sea cooking; seafood; squid; tuna; tuna fish

Catalan meat dishes: freginat; meatballs; mixed stew; paupiettes; sheep meat; stew; trinxat

Catalan sausages: butifarra; butifarra catalana; llonganissa; longaniza

Catalan soups: escudella; olla barrejada

Catalan mixed vegetables: escalivada; samfaina

Catalan protected origin vegetables: alta anoia chick pead; artichokes; bufet potatoes; carxofes; castellfollit beans; cigronets de l'alta anoia; favetes; ganxet beans; mongeta del ganxet; mongetes de castellfollit; patates del bufet

Catalan Sauces: allioli; romesco; xato; xató; xatonada

Catalan Pastries: carquinyolis; coca de cireres; coca de pinyons; coca de sant joan; coques de cireres; panellets; pastisset; pastissets; torro; torró; torrons; tortell

Catalan Desserts: burnt cream; catalan cream; crema catalana; crema cremada; creme brulee; menjar blanc

Calçots: broiled onions; calcotada; calçotada; calcotades; calçotades; calcots; calçots

Mushrooms: mushroom; mushrooms; rovellons

Bunyols: bunyols

Snails: caracoles; cargols; snails

Nuts: almond; chessnut; fruits secs; hazelnut; nuts; peanut

Fresh Fruit and Veg: fresh fruit; fresh vegetables

Famous Catalan Cooks: carles gaig; carme rusalleda; estrella michelin; ferran adria; ferran Adrià; joan roca; michelin star; michelin stars; santi santamaria; sergi arola

Paella: fideua; fideuá; paella

Tapas: appetizer; croquettes; eateries; patatas bravas; patates braves; tapa; tapas

Spanish Tortilla: omelet; omelette; potato tortilla; potatoes tortilla; spanish omelette; spanish tortilla; tortilla; tortilla de patata; tortilla de patatas; tortillas

Embotit: chorizo; cold meat platter; cured ham; ham; jamon; jamón; jamon serrano; jamón serrano; salami; serrano; serrano ham

Gazpacho: gazpacho

Churro: churro; churros

Breads: baguette; baguettes; breads; crepe; crepes; croissant; croissants; garlic bread; gingerbread; pastries; pastry; waffle; waffles

International Fast Food: bacon; bocadillo; bocadillos; burger; burger king; burgerking; burgers; crisps; donuts; doughnut; dunkin donuts; english breakfast; fast food; fish and chips; french fries; fries; hamburger; jacket potatoes; kfc; mcdonald; mcdonalds; sandwich; sandwiches; sausages; subway

European food: greek restaurant; italian restaurant; moussaka; pasta; pizza; spaghetti

Asian food: asian food; chinese restaurant; curry; falafel; japanese restaurant; kebab; kebabs; sushi

Cava: cava; cava freixenet; caves codorniu; caves freixenet; codorniu; freixenet; freixenet cava;

Winery: moscatel; moscatell; oenologic; oenological; oenotourism; sherry; torres wine; vinegar; vino; vino torres; wine; wines

Spanish popular drinks: calimochó; sangria; sangrias

Champagne: champagne

Beer: beer; beers; cervesa; cerveza; cervezas; cider; estrella damm; guinness

Spirits: absinth; brandy; chupito; chupitos; liquor; mojito; mojitos; tequila; vodka; whiskey; whisky

International Refreshments: coca cola; cocacola; coke; cola; fanta; red bull

Fruit drinks: fruit juice; juices; milk shake; milk shakes; milkshake; smoothie; smoothies

B.6. Composite words

accordionists gathering; action tourism; active tourism; adventure races; adventure sports; aguilar de segarra; alas i cerc; alàs i cerc; alberg de sant jordi; alcoholic drink; alcoholic drinks; alfara de carles; almond tree; almond trees; alos de balaguer; alòs de balaguer; alt aneu; alt àneu; alta anoia chick peas; ametlla de mar; ametlla del valles; ametlla del vallès; amusement places; antoni soler; aplec del cargol; apple tree; apple trees; arabic bath; arabic baths; arabic style; arc de bera; arc de berà; arc de triomf; archeological site; archeological sites; art deco; art nouveau; artesa de segre; arts centre; asian food; ausias marc; ausiàs marc; avellanes i santa linya; averse to; avinguda diagonal; avinyonet de puigventos; avinyonet de puigventós; avinyonet del penedes; avinyonet del penedès; awful-looking; backward-looking; bad atmosphere; bad choice; bad impression; bad-featured; baix pallars; ball de bastons; balls parlats; barbera de la conca; barberà de la conca; barbera del valles; barberà del vallès; barcelona football club; baronia de rialb; barri antic; barri gotic; barri gòtic; barri vell; barrio gotico; batllo house; batre; beech wood; beetle-browed; bellas artes; bellcaire d'emporda; bellcaire d'empordà; bellmunt del priorat; bellver de cerdanya; belly dancing; bigues i riells; birthday party; bisbal de falset; bisbal del penedes; bisbal del penedès; bisbal d'emporda; bisbal d'empordà; black jack; black madonna; black virgin; blue sky; bluest skies; boavi plain; boi taull; boï taüll; bona fide; boqueria market; borges blanques; borges del camp; botanic garden; bread with tomato; broiled onions; bronze age; buddy-buddy; bufet potatoes; bull fight; bull fighting; burger king; burnt cream; butifarra catalana; cabra feixet; cabrera de mar; cabrera d'igualada; cactus park; cal baro; cal baró; cal teixidor; caldes de malavella; caldes de montbui; caldes de montbui; caldes d'estrac; calonge de segarra; camí de ronda; camí de ronda; camí dels bons homes; camí romeu; camp nou; can ballester; can barrera; can brunet; can cabanyes; can gari; can garí; can lleonard; can manent; can modolell; can palauet; can tintorer; can torrent; canary islands; canet d'adri; canet de mar; canoves i samalus; cànoves i samalús; can't bear; can't stand; cap de creus; cap salou; cape salou; cardo sierra; carles gaig; carme ruscalleda; carrer ample; carrer major; carros de foc; casa amatller; casa batllo; casa batlló; casa benefica; casa benèfica; casa calvet; casa coll; casa cortada; casa de les caputxines; casa de les punxes; casa galceran; casa lleo morera; casa lleó morera; casa mavàs; casa mila; casa milà; casa navas; casa quadras; casa serra; casa sivilla; casa sola morales; casa solà morales; casa vicens; cassa de la selva; cassà de la selva; castell de l'arenys; castell de montjuic; castell de montjuïc; castell de mur; castell de pubol; castell de púbol; castell de sant joan; castell dels tres dragons; castellar de n'hug; castellar del riu; castellet i la gornal; castelfollit beans; castelfollit de la roca; castelfollit de riubregos; castelfollit de riubregós; castelfollit del boix; castellnou de bages; castello d'empuries; castello d'empúries; castle of pubol; catalan cream; catalan culture; catalan dance; catalan identity; catalan language; catalunya central; catalan national; catalan traditions; catholic church; cau ferrat; cava freixenet; cave of saint ignatius; cave painting; cave paintings; caves codorniu; caves freixenet; celler guell; celler güell; cellera de ter; centre de cultura contemporania de barcelona; centre de cultura contemporània de barcelona; cervia de les garrigues; cervià de les garrigues; cervia de ter; cervià de ter; chap-fallen; charmed by; chinese restaurant; cigronets de l'alta anoia; cistercian route; city center; city centre; city hall; city tour; ciutadella park; ciutat vella; civil war; clariana de cardener; climbing routes; coca cola; coca de cireres; coca de llardons; coca de pinyons; coca de sant joan; cold meat platter; coll de nargo; coll de nargó; colom statue; colombo statue; colonia guell; colònia güell; columbus statue; columbus monument; coma i la pedra; coma-ruga; conca de dalt; contemporania; copper mine; coques de cireres; corbera de llobregat; corbera d'ebre; cornella de llobregat; cornellà de llobregat; cornella del terri; cornellà del terri; cornudella de montsant; corte ingles; corte inglés; costa brava; costa daurada; costa de garraf; costa del maresme; cova de sant ignasi; crema catalana; crema cremada; creme brulee; creu de terme; cristofor colom; cruise ship; cultural centre; cultural tour; cured ham; dames i vells; dance of death; dansa d'arenys; de luxe; death dance; delta de l'ebre; delta nature reserve; department store; depressed melancholy; different language; domenech i montaner; domènech i montaner; drama festival; duana nova; dunkin donuts; easing off; easing up; ebre delta; ebro delta; el born; el poblenou; el prat; els vilars; english breakfast; enric granados; espluga calba; espluga de francoli; espluga de francolí; esplugues de llobregat; estacio de franca; estació de França; estacio del nord; estació del nord; estadi olimpic; estadi olímpic; estany de sant maurici; estrella damm; estrella michelin; evening party; evergreen oak; evergreen oaks; fageda d'en jorda; fageda d'en jordà; family holidays; fast food; fc barcelona; feast of saint john; feria de abril; ferran adria; ferran adrià; festa

de sant joan; festa del porc i la cervesa; festa major; festes del segar i del batre; fiesta mayor; figols i alinya; figols i alinya; finca guell; finca güell; fira de la castanya; fira de les garrigues; fira de l'oli; fira del teatre; fish and chips; fish dishes; fishing port; floquet de neu; flour mill; flying sports; fogars de tordera; folk festival; folk traditions; fond of; fontanals de cerdanya; football club; football club barcelona; football cup; football player; football stadium; football team; formula one; fortified village; free flying; freixenet cava; french fries; fresh fish; fresh food; fresh fruit; fresh vegetables; frightful-looking; fruit juice; fruits secs; full of life; fundacio joan miro; fundació joan miró; fundacio miro; funicular de sant joan; funicular of sant joan; funicular to sant joan; game dishes; ganxet beans; garlic bread; garraf hills; gavet de la conca; geographic relief; god-awful; golf club; good choice; good impression; good life; good-looking; good-natured; gothic district; gothic quarter; got lost; grand prix; granja d'escarp; greek restaurant; green areas; green way; green ways; guardiola de bergueda; guardiola de berguedà; guell palace; guell park; guils de cerdanya; happy hour; happy hours; hard time; hazelnut trees; helter-skelter; hen party; herbal remedies; hermitage of sant joan; hermitage sant joan; high-priced; higgledy-piggledy; history museum; home sick; holy week; horrible-looking; horse trekking; horse-riding; horta de sant joan; hospital de sant pau; hospitalet de l'infant; hospitalet de llobregat; hostalets de pierola; hostel sant jordi; hostile to; human pyramid; human pyramids; human tower; human towers; iberian citadel; iberian settlement; ice cream; ice-cream; illes medes; ill-favoured; imax port vell; imperial tarraco; imperial tàrraco; in love with; industrial tourism; infatuated by; intangible culture; intangible heritage; international community; iron route; isona i conca della; isona i conca dellà; italian restaurant; ivars d'urgell; jacint verdaguer; jacket potatoes; jam-packed; jamon serrano; jamón serrano; jardí botanic; jardín botánico; japanese restaurant; jazz festival; jelly fish; jewish bath; jewish baths; jewish district; jewish quarter; joan maragall; joan roca; joanot martorell; josep carner; josa i tuixen; josep pla; kind-hearted; la granada; la llibertat; la merce; la mercè; la moreneta; la pedrera; la pera; la pineda; la riba; la suda; les agudes; les cabanyes; les corts; les piles; les teresianes; letting up; l'estany; lles de cerdanya; llorenç del penedes; llorenç del penedès; lloret de mar; local culture; local dishes; local festivities; local food; local gastronomy; local identity; local tongue; local traditions; local language; lots of people; lots of tourists; low-priced; luminous fountains; macanet de cabrenys; maçanet de cabrenys; macanet de la selva; maçanet de la selva; magic fountain; maia de montcal; maià de montcal; main square; malgrat de mar; many tourists; mare de deu; mare de déu; mare magnum; marià fortune; maria fortune; marine reserve; market town; marxa beret; mas de barberans; masia freixa; masies de roda; masies de voltrega; masies de voltregà; medieval quarter; medieval week; mediterranean sea; menjar blanc; mercado de la boqueria; mercat de la boqueria; mercat de les flors; mercat de musica viva; merce rodoreda; mercè rodoreda; mexican hat; mexican hats; miami platja; michelin star; michelin stars; middle age; middle ages; migrating birds; mies van der rohe; mila house; mila i fontanals; milà i fontanals; milk shake; milk shakes; mining tradition; mixed stew; modern style; modernist style; modernistic style; moixero crossing; moixeró crossing; molins de rei; moll de la fusta; mollet de peralada; mollet del valles; mollet del vallès; monestir de pedralbes; monestir de poblet; mongeta del ganxet; monstrous-looking; monument to columbus; mongetes de castelfollit; montcada i reixac; montjuic castle; montjuic fountain; montjuïc fountain; montjuic fountains; montjuïc fountains; montoliu de segarra; montornes del valles; montornès del vallès; monument a colom; mora d'ebre; móra d'ebre; mora la nova; móra la nova; morera de montsant; mountain bike; mountain biking; mountain cuisine; mountain refuge; mountain-biking; muntanyes de prades; museu d'art; music band; music festival; music festivals; narcis oller; narcís oller; narrow streets; national park; native culture; native language; native tongue; natural interest; natural park; nature area; nature reserve; nature routes; nature sports; nature trails; naut aran; new jersey; new orleans; new park; new year; new years; new york; night club; night life; noarre cirque; not affordable; not friendly; not fun; not good; not great; not interesting; not so interesting; not so friendly; not so good; not very good; not nice; not perfect; not so nice; not real; not true; not very nice; not very happy; not worth; nothing to do; nou camp; nou de gaia; nou de gaià; object to; occitan country; off the beaten track; old city; old fashioned; old quarter; olesa de bonesvalls; olive oil; olive trees; olla barrejada; olympic games; olympic stadium; olympic village; omells de na gaia; on good terms; onyar river; os de balaguer; outdoor activities; outdoor activity; own culture; own language; own tongue; pa amb tomaca; pa amb tomàquet; pa amb tomaquet; pacs del penedes; pacs del penedès; palau albeniz; palau albéniz; palau d'anglesola; palau de la generalitat; palau de la musica; palau de la música; palau de la virreina; palau de l'agricultura; palau de pedralbes; palau de plegamans; palau de santa eulalia; palau de santa eulàlia; palau del mar; palau episcopal; palau guell; palau güell; palau marc; palau municipal d'esports; palau nacional; palau reial; palau sant jordi; palm tree; palm trees; palma d'ebre; palol de revardit; palsy-walsy; pan con tomato; panta de siurana; pantà de siurana; parc de la ciutadella; parc forestal; parc guell; parc güell; parc natural; parc nou; parc sama; parc sama; parc samà; parets del valles; parets del vallès; park güell; part alta; part vella; paseo de gracia; passeig arqueologic; passeig arqueològic; passeig de gracia; passeig de gràcia; passeig maritim; passion play; passion plays; patatas braves; patates braves; patates del bufet; paths of memory; pau casals; peace route; peanut butter; peyes altes; pica d'estats;

pick pocketed; pick pocketer; pick pocketers; pick pocketing; pick pockets; pineda de mar; pinell de brai; pinell de solsones; pinell de solsonès; pla de beret; pla de la calma; pla de santa maria; pla del penedès; placa catalunya; plaça catalunya; placa de catalunya; plaça de catalunya; placa de sant jaume; placa d'espunya; plaça d'espunya; plaça imperial; placa reial; plaça reial; placa sant jaume; plaça sant jaume; plaça de sant jaume; plain-featured; plain-looking; plans de sio; plans de sió; platja d'aro; play sports; play tennis; played pool; played sports; played tennis; plenty of tourists; pobla de cervoles; pobla de cérvoles; pobla de claramunt; pobla de lillet; pobla de mafumet; pobla de massaluca; pobla de montornes; pobla de montornès; pobla de segur; poble espanyol; poble sec; pont d'armentera; pont de bar; pont de molins; pont de suert; pont de vilomara; pont del diable; pool game; popular culture; popular dances; popular devotion; popular devotions; popular tradition; popular traditions; port aventura; port de la selva; port esportiu; port lligat; port vell; porxos d'en xifre; porxos d'en xifré; potato tortilla; potatoes tortilla; prades mountains; prats de llucanes; prats de lluçanès; prats de rei; prats i sansor; premià de mar; premia de mar; primavera sound; protected area; protected areas; pubol castle; puerto deportivo; puig i cadafalch; quatre barres; queso manchego; rambla catalunya; rambla nova; rambla vella; ramon llull; ramon muntaner; red bull; regional identity; religious tradition; repulsive-looking; reserva natural del delta; revetlla de sant joan; riba-roja d'ebre; ribera d'urgellet; ribes de freser; riells i viabrea; riera de gaia; riera de gaià; roasted tomatoes; roca del valles; roca del vallès; rocafort de queralt; rock concert; rock festival; rock formations; rock music; rocky mountains; rocky outcrop; roda de bara; roda de barà; roda de ter; roller coaster; roman bath; roman baths; roman circus; roman villa; ruta del cister; rythm of the night; sacred family; sagrada familia; sagrada família; sagrat cor; saint george; saint george's day; saint john; saint valentine; sant valentines; salas de pallars; salàs de pallars; sales de llierca; salnitre cave; salt fish; sant adria de besos; sant adrià de besòs; sant agusti de llucanes; sant agustí de lluçanès; sant andreu de la barca; sant andreu de llavaneres; sant aniol de finestres; sant bartomeu del grau; sant boi de llobregat; sant boi de llucanes; sant boi de lluçanès; sant carles de la rapita; sant carles de la ràpita; sant cebria; sant cebrià; sant celoni; sant climent de llobregat; sant climent sescebes; sant cugat; sant esteve de la sarga; sant esteve de palautordera; sant esteve sesrovires; sant feliu de buixalleu; sant feliu de codines; sant feliu de guixols; sant feliu de guixols; sant feliu de llobregat; sant feliu de pallerols; sant feliu sasserra; sant ferriol; sant fruitos de bages; sant fruitós de bages; sant guim de freixenet; sant guim de la plana; sant hilari sacalm; sant iscle de vallalta; sant jaume de frontanya; sant jaume de frontanyà; sant jaume dels domenys; sant jaume d'enveja; sant joan castle; sant joan day; sant joan de les abadesses; sant joan de les fonts; sant joan de vilatorrada; sant joan despi; sant joan despi; sant joan funicular; sant joan les fonts; sant joan station; sant joan's day; sant jordi; sant jordi alberg; sant jordi day; sant jordi hostel; sant jordi's day; sant julia de ramis; sant julià de ramis; sant julia de vilatorta; sant julià de vilatorta; sant julia del llor; sant julià del llor; sant just desvern; sant llorenç de la muga; sant llorenç de la muga; sant llorenç de morunys; sant llorenç de morunys; sant llorenç d'hortons; sant llorenç d'hortons; sant llorenç savall; sant llorenç savall; sant marti de llemenà; sant martí de llemenà; sant marti de riucorb; sant martí de riucorb; sant marti de tous; sant martí de tous; sant marti sarroca; sant martí sarroca; sant marti sesgueioles; sant martí sesgueioles; sant marti vell; sant martí vell; sant mateu de bages; sant miquel de campmajor; sant pau de seguries; sant pau de segúries; sant pere de ribes; sant pere de riudebitlles; sant pere de rodes; sant pere de torello; sant pere de torelló; sant pere pescador; sant pere sallavinera; sant pol de mar; sant quirze de besora; sant quirze del valles; sant quirze del vallès; sant quirze safaja; sant ramon; sant sadurni d'anoia; sant sadurní d'anoia; sant sadurni de l'heura; sant sadurní de l'heura; sant sadurni d'osormort; sant sadurní d'osormort; sant salvador; sant salvador de guardiola; sant vicenc de castellet; sant vicenç de castellet; sant vicenc de montalt; sant vicenç de montalt; santa barbara; santa bàrbara; santa coloma de cervello; santa coloma de cervelló; santa coloma de farners; santa coloma de gramenet; santa coloma de queralt; santa cristina d'aro; santa eugenia de berga; santa eugènia de berga; santa eulalia de roncana; santa eulàlia de ronçana; santa fe del penedes; santa fe del penedès; santa margarida de montbui; santa margarida de montbuí; santa margarida i els monjos; santa maria de besora; santa maria de corco; santa maria de corcó; santa maria de merles; santa maria de merlès; santa maria de palautordera; santa maria del mar; santa maria d'olo; santa maria d'oló; santa oliva; santa pau; santa perpetua de mogoda; santa perpètua de mogoda; santa susanna; santes creus; santi santamaria; sarria de ter; sarrià de ter; sarroca de bellera; scuba diving; scuba-diving; sea cooking; selva de mar; selva del camp; semana santa; sentiut de sio; sentiut de sió; sergi arola; serrano ham; setmana medieval; setmana santa; seu d'urgell; seu vella; sharp-worded; sheep meat; sheepdog trial; siurana marsh; ski resort; snow drifts; solc festival; spanish guitar; spanish tortilla; spanish omelette; stag party; steep cliffs; stone age; street drama festival; swimming pool; table tennis; tarraco viva; teatre del liceu; teatre grec; teatre nacional; terres de l'ebre; terres de lleida; terrible-looking; tete montoliu; time-honoured; time-worn; theme park; tomato bread; tomato toast; torre agbar; torre barona; torre de cabdella; torre de collserola; torre de fontaubella; torre roja; torrelles de foix; torrelles de llobregat; torres de segre; torres wine; torroella de fluvia; torroella de fluvià; torroella de montgri; torroella de montgrí; tortilla de

patata; tortilla de patatas; tossa de mar; tower of the scipios; town council; traditional food; train to sant joan; tres tombs; triumph arch; tuna fish; turo de l'home; turó de l'home; umbrella pines; unfinished cathedral; unfinished church; up-to-date; valentine's; vall d'aigua; vall d'aneu; vall d'àneu; vall d'aran; vall d'arreu; vall de banyà; vall de boi; vall de boï; vall de bonabe; vall de bonabé; vall de cardos; vall de cardós; vall de nuria; vall de núria; vall de sant aniol; vall de santa magdalena; vall del riu corb; vall fosca; vallbona d'anoia; vallbona de les monges; vallfogona de balaguer; vallfogona de ripolles; vallfogona de ripollès; vallfogona de riucorb; valls d'aguiar; valls de valira; vansa i fornols; vaqueira beret; very kind; via augusta; via verda; vila olímpica; vila olímpica; vila vella; vilafranca del penedes; vilalba dels arcs; vilalba sasserra; vilallonga de ter; vilanova de la barca; vilanova de l'aguda; vilanova de meia; vilanova de meià; vilanova de prades; vilanova de sau; vilanova del valles; vilanova del vallès; vilanova d'escornalbou; vilanova i la geltru; vilanova i la geltrú; vila-seca; vilella alta; vilella baixa; vilobi del penedes; vilobí del penedès; vilobi d'onyar; vilobí d'onyar; virgin mary; viver i serrateix; wandered around; wandering around; warm-hearted; watch paths; water biking; water park; water skiing; water sports; well-disposed; well-organized; went dancing; wild animals; wine cellar; wine cellars; wine cooperative; winery cellars; world heritage; xerta lock; yacht club

Annex C. Correlation tables

Table C.1

Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (Official tourism websites)

	1.1	1.2	2	3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	4	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5	5.1	5.2	5.3	6	7	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	7.10	7.11	8	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4
1	.98	.86	.44	.37	.38	.24	.22	.24	.33	.36	.33	.19	.59	.35	.21	.20	.22	.18	.29	.28	.24	.15	.16	.24	.31	.21	.35	.22	.22	.18	.35	.48	.56	.31	.22	.46
1.1	1.0	.74	.44	.35	.36	.22	.19	.24	.29	.35	.33	.16	.58	.32	.19	.16	.21	.17	.27	.25	.21	.13	.14	.21	.27	.19	.32	.19	.19	.17	.31	.46	.54	.29	.21	.45
1.2	.74	1.0	.36	.35	.33	.25	.25	.20	.35	.32	.27	.22	.49	.35	.20	.25	.20	.18	.27	.29	.26	.19	.17	.26	.34	.22	.35	.23	.25	.18	.39	.43	.49	.31	.21	.40
2	.44	.36	1.0	.63	.40	.33	.19	.65	.39	.43	.43	.22	.40	.42	.20	.16	.27	.18	.36	.55	.46	.25	.43	.50	.46	.47	.58	.49	.42	.50	.52	.48	.33	.36	.39	.51
3	.35	.35	.63	1.0	.71	.50	.61	.81	.68	.47	.41	.32	.38	.55	.50	.28	.39	.48	.54	.54	.40	.32	.52	.47	.59	.36	.60	.43	.40	.36	.68	.57	.48	.51	.41	.54
3.1	.36	.33	.40	.71	1.0	.45	.35	.38	.62	.39	.34	.24	.34	.48	.63	.20	.34	.63	.58	.37	.29	.24	.31	.33	.38	.26	.43	.30	.29	.23	.50	.49	.47	.44	.31	.44
3.2	.22	.25	.33	.50	.45	1.0	.25	.26	.66	.32	.28	.22	.27	.39	.40	.28	.34	.37	.57	.33	.28	.25	.23	.30	.40	.28	.38	.27	.30	.20	.40	.42	.36	.37	.29	.41
3.3	.19	.25	.19	.61	.35	.25	1.0	.13	.50	.36	.30	.33	.24	.42	.45	.25	.27	.44	.34	.26	.19	.15	.17	.24	.32	.20	.32	.22	.20	.16	.38	.28	.27	.21	.17	.27
3.4	.24	.20	.65	.81	.38	.26	.13	1.0	.33	.26	.24	.13	.23	.31	.15	.13	.21	.13	.26	.45	.34	.26	.53	.38	.49	.27	.47	.35	.31	.33	.53	.43	.31	.41	.35	.41
3.5	.29	.35	.39	.68	.62	.66	.50	.33	1.0	.62	.51	.55	.47	.73	.62	.40	.54	.58	.74	.51	.37	.31	.39	.44	.57	.38	.61	.42	.41	.32	.72	.56	.52	.44	.40	.54
4	.35	.32	.43	.47	.39	.32	.36	.26	.62	1.0	.96	.80	.60	.92	.56	.29	.47	.53	.60	.53	.40	.22	.29	.48	.47	.44	.61	.50	.44	.47	.57	.49	.37	.32	.39	.53
4.1	.33	.27	.43	.41	.34	.28	.30	.24	.51	.96	1.0	.64	.53	.82	.49	.24	.40	.47	.53	.50	.39	.18	.26	.46	.41	.44	.58	.49	.43	.48	.49	.46	.32	.30	.40	.50
4.2	.16	.22	.22	.32	.24	.22	.33	.13	.55	.80	.64	1.0	.36	.77	.48	.26	.44	.45	.48	.29	.18	.12	.15	.25	.32	.21	.37	.25	.21	.22	.44	.28	.25	.18	.16	.30
4.3	.58	.49	.40	.38	.34	.27	.24	.23	.47	.60	.53	.36	1.0	.58	.35	.20	.36	.32	.43	.55	.50	.28	.29	.51	.46	.45	.60	.51	.49	.44	.51	.54	.49	.35	.40	.56
4.4	.32	.35	.42	.55	.48	.39	.42	.31	.73	.92	.82	.77	.58	1.0	.60	.33	.49	.57	.66	.57	.42	.29	.38	.51	.56	.44	.66	.51	.49	.45	.69	.52	.41	.37	.42	.55
5	.19	.20	.20	.50	.63	.40	.45	.15	.62	.56	.49	.48	.35	.60	1.0	.31	.56	.99	.55	.28	.20	.18	.19	.26	.32	.19	.36	.25	.23	.17	.41	.34	.31	.28	.19	.33
5.1	.16	.25	.16	.28	.20	.28	.25	.13	.40	.29	.24	.26	.20	.33	.31	1.0	.47	.23	.32	.28	.21	.19	.18	.24	.39	.19	.34	.24	.25	.15	.36	.39	.38	.36	.14	.36
5.2	.21	.20	.27	.39	.34	.34	.27	.21	.54	.47	.40	.44	.36	.49	.56	.47	1.0	.44	.48	.34	.29	.28	.24	.30	.35	.17	.39	.25	.29	.20	.46	.49	.40	.50	.20	.45
5.3	.17	.18	.18	.48	.63	.37	.44	.13	.58	.53	.47	.45	.32	.57	.99	.23	.44	1.0	.51	.25	.16	.14	.16	.22	.28	.17	.32	.22	.20	.15	.36	.28	.26	.21	.17	.27
6	.27	.27	.36	.54	.58	.57	.34	.26	.74	.60	.53	.48	.43	.66	.55	.32	.48	.51	1.0	.43	.33	.22	.29	.38	.43	.41	.52	.39	.35	.30	.51	.49	.42	.36	.42	.49
7	.25	.29	.55	.54	.37	.33	.26	.45	.51	.53	.50	.29	.55	.57	.28	.28	.34	.25	.43	1.0	.92	.53	.62	.98	.81	.82	.90	.90	.93	.89	.75	.75	.51	.61	.58	.77
7.1	.21	.26	.46	.40	.29	.28	.19	.34	.37	.40	.39	.18	.50	.42	.20	.21	.29	.16	.33	.92	1.0	.62	.48	.94	.62	.74	.75	.80	.91	.83	.57	.73	.43	.66	.50	.75
7.2	.13	.19	.25	.32	.24	.25	.15	.26	.31	.22	.18	.12	.28	.29	.18	.19	.28	.14	.22	.53	.62	1.0	.42	.50	.44	.25	.43	.30	.48	.27	.49	.54	.35	.59	.25	.50
7.3	.14	.17	.43	.52	.31	.23	.17	.53	.39	.29	.26	.15	.29	.38	.19	.18	.24	.16	.29	.62	.48	.42	1.0	.57	.67	.37	.58	.45	.49	.36	.63	.51	.40	.47	.39	.49
7.4	.21	.26	.50	.47	.33	.30	.24	.38	.44	.48	.46	.25	.51	.51	.26	.24	.30	.22	.38	.98	.94	.50	.57	1.0	.73	.81	.85	.87	.93	.89	.66	.71	.47	.58	.56	.73
7.5	.27	.34	.46	.59	.38	.40	.32	.49	.57	.47	.41	.32	.46	.56	.32	.39	.35	.28	.43	.81	.62	.44	.67	.73	1.0	.56	.82	.67	.68	.59	.81	.68	.59	.54	.45	.67
7.6	.19	.22	.47	.36	.26	.28	.20	.27	.38	.44	.44	.21	.45	.44	.19	.19	.17	.17	.41	.82	.74	.25	.37	.81	.56	1.0	.75	.85	.76	.80	.49	.56	.35	.37	.64	.61
7.7	.32	.35	.58	.60	.43	.38	.32	.47	.61	.61	.58	.37	.60	.66	.36	.34	.39	.32	.52	.90	.75	.43	.58	.85	.82	.75	1.0	.82	.78	.74	.83	.75	.59	.56	.61	.78
7.8	.19	.23	.49	.43	.30	.27	.22	.35	.42	.50	.49	.25	.51	.51	.25	.24	.25	.22	.39	.90	.80	.30	.45	.87	.67	.85	.82	1.0	.84	.88	.60	.61	.39	.44	.53	.67
7.9	.19	.25	.42	.40	.29	.30	.20	.31	.41	.44	.43	.21	.49	.49	.23	.25	.29	.20	.35	.93	.91	.48	.49	.93	.68	.76	.78	.84	1.0	.86	.60	.70	.42	.60	.52	.73
7.10	.17	.18	.50	.36	.23	.20	.16	.33	.32	.47	.48	.22	.44	.45	.17	.15	.20	.15	.30	.89	.83	.27	.36	.89	.59	.80	.74	.88	.86	1.0	.50	.55	.32	.40	.51	.60
7.11	.31	.39	.52	.68	.50	.40	.38	.53	.72	.57	.49	.44	.51	.69	.41	.36	.46	.36	.51	.75	.57	.49	.63	.66	.81	.49	.83	.60	.60	.50	1.0	.64	.57	.52	.48	.62
8	.46	.43	.48	.57	.49	.42	.28	.43	.56	.49	.46	.28	.54	.52	.34	.39	.49	.28	.49	.75	.73	.54	.51	.71	.68	.56	.75	.61	.70	.55	.64	1.0	.80	.90	.51	.97
8.1	.54	.49	.33	.48	.47	.36	.27	.31	.52	.37	.32	.25	.49	.41	.31	.38	.40	.26	.42	.51	.43	.35	.40	.47	.59	.35	.59	.39	.42	.32	.57	.80	1.0	.64	.36	.69
8.2	.29	.31	.36	.51	.44	.37	.21	.41	.44	.32	.30	.18	.35	.37	.28	.36	.50	.21	.36	.61	.66	.59	.47	.58	.54	.37	.56	.44	.60	.40	.52	.90	.64	1.0	.33	.82
8.3	.21	.21	.39	.41	.31	.29	.17	.35	.40	.39	.40	.16	.40	.42	.19	.14	.20	.17	.42	.58	.50	.25	.39	.56	.45	.64	.61	.53	.52	.51	.48	.51	.36	.33	1.0	.53
8.4	.45	.40	.51	.54	.44	.41	.27	.41	.54	.53	.50	.30	.56	.55	.33	.36	.45	.27	.49	.77	.75	.50	.49	.73	.67	.61	.78	.67	.73	.60	.62	.97	.69	.82	.53	1.0

In this case no Sig. (2-tailed) numbers have been displayed as all the correlations are significant at the 0.001 level. (Highest correlations in bold).

Table C.2

Correlations among 31 specific attraction factors (travel blogs and reviews)

	1.1	1.2	2	3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	4	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5	5.1	5.2	5.3	6	7	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	7.10	7.11	8	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4
1	.92	.53	.17	.33	.34	*.01	.06	.23	.06	.25	.21	.15	.14	.14	.13	.05	.15	.07	.33	.29	.26	.17	.09	.22	.13	.10	.15	.11	.16	.18	.15	.40	.34	.23	.35	.02
1.1	1.0	.16	.18	.35	.35	.02	.06	.24	.06	.26	.21	.16	.14	.14	.14	.05	.16	.07	.36	.32	.29	.19	.10	.25	.15	.11	.15	.12	.18	.20	.16	.43	.37	.26	.38	.02
1.2	.16	1.0	.04	.08	.09	^-.01	.02	.06	^0.01	.08	.06	.04	.05	.04	.03	^0.01	.03	.03	.07	.04	.04	^0.01	.02	.03	^0.01	.03	.06	.02	.02	.03	.04	.06	.07	.03	.05	^0.00
2	.18	.04	1.0	.24	.17	^0.01	.04	.32	.02	.15	.12	.10	.06	.07	.05	*.01	.07	.04	.18	.17	.14	.08	.06	.14	.08	.07	.09	.11	.10	.12	.12	.19	.12	.11	.19	.06
3	.35	.08	.24	1.0	.74	.28	.52	.54	.18	.18	.16	.11	.07	.09	.18	.11	.18	.09	.28	.22	.20	.12	.11	.17	.12	.08	.10	.11	.12	.12	.13	.28	.22	.16	.27	.02
3.1	.35	.09	.17	.74	1.0	^0.00	.05	.24	.05	.12	.10	.09	.06	.06	.21	.14	.19	.10	.26	.14	.12	.08	.05	.11	.05	.05	.08	.08	.08	.07	.11	.23	.20	.12	.21	^0.01
3.2	.02	-.01	.01	.28	.00	1.0	^0.00	^0.00	^0.01	.08	.10	^0.01	^-.01	^0.01	^0.01	^0.00	*.01	^0.00	.04	.02	^0.00	^0.01	-.02	.02	^0.00	^0.00	^-.01	.04	.02	.04	^0.01	.04	.02	.03	.04	^-.01
3.3	.06	.02	.04	.52	.05	.00	1.0	.05	^0.01	.04	.03	.03	^0.01	.02	.02	^0.00	.03	^0.01	.08	.05	.05	.03	*.01	.04	*.01	*.01	.02	.02	.02	.02	.03	.05	.05	.03	.05	^0.00
3.4	.24	.06	.32	.54	.24	.00	.05	1.0	.05	.16	.14	.10	.07	.08	.08	.03	.09	.06	.19	.26	.23	.12	.20	.20	.21	.10	.12	.09	.13	.15	.12	.27	.19	.16	.25	.04
3.5	.06	.01	.02	.18	.05	.01	.05	1.0	.07	.06	.02	.02	.06	.07	.07	.07	.05	.02	.07	.13	.14	.12	.03	.08	.06	.02	.03	.05	.03	.03	.04	.08	.04	.06	.07	^0.00
4	.26	.08	.15	.18	.12	.08	.04	.16	.07	1.0	.92	.55	.29	.48	.08	^0.01	.09	.11	.28	.31	.27	.15	.07	.21	.09	.13	.17	.19	.17	.30	.12	.27	.19	.13	.29	.03
4.1	.21	.06	.12	.16	.10	.10	.03	.14	.06	.92	1.0	.28	.19	.27	.07	^0.01	.08	.09	.26	.26	.24	.11	.06	.18	.07	.11	.14	.17	.15	.28	.10	.24	.16	.11	.26	.03
4.2	.16	.04	.10	.11	.09	.01	.03	.10	.02	.55	.28	1.0	.05	.13	.05	^0.01	.06	.08	.14	.13	.10	.06	.03	.08	.04	.06	.08	.09	.08	.15	.06	.14	.10	.08	.14	.04
4.3	.14	.05	.06	.07	.06	-.01	.01	.07	.02	.29	.19	.05	1.0	.08	.02	^0.00	.02	.05	.09	.09	.08	.03	.04	.07	.04	.05	.09	.05	.03	.08	.05	.08	.08	.02	.10	^0.00
4.4	.14	.04	.07	.09	.06	.01	.02	.08	.06	.48	.27	.13	.08	1.0	.05	^0.01	.06	.05	.16	.26	.24	.19	.05	.19	.06	.07	.10	.11	.12	.16	.11	.16	.10	.08	.17	^0.01
5	.14	.03	.05	.18	.21	.01	.02	.08	.07	.08	.07	.05	.02	.05	1.0	.79	.88	.34	.13	.14	.11	.08	.03	.10	.07	.03	.08	.12	.08	.08	.06	.15	.12	.09	.13	^0.00
5.1	.05	.01	.01	.11	.14	.00	.00	.03	.07	.01	.01	.01	.00	.01	.79	1.0	.42	.12	.03	.05	.02	.04	^0.01	.02	.03	^0.00	.03	^0.01	.02	.03	^0.01	.06	.05	.04	.05	^0.00
5.2	.16	.03	.07	.18	.19	.01	.03	.09	.05	.09	.08	.06	.02	.06	.88	.42	1.0	.23	.16	.18	.15	.10	.04	.14	.09	.04	.08	.17	.11	.09	.07	.17	.13	.10	.16	^0.00
5.3	.07	.03	.04	.09	.10	.00	.01	.06	.02	.11	.09	.08	.05	.05	.34	.12	.23	1.0	.10	.04	^0.01	.02	.03	.02	.03	.07	.05	.02	.02	.04	.06	.06	.02	.06	^0.00	
6	.36	.07	.18	.28	.26	.04	.08	.19	.07	.28	.26	.14	.09	.16	.13	.03	.16	.10	1.0	.29	.25	.16	.09	.22	.11	.13	.16	.19	.24	.16	.15	.33	.25	.19	.32	^0.01
7	.32	.04	.17	.22	.14	.02	.05	.26	.13	.31	.26	.13	.09	.26	.14	.05	.18	.04	.29	1.0	.77	.77	.39	.66	.45	.26	.31	.38	.42	.57	.27	.47	.24	.33	.45	.03
7.1	.29	.04	.14	.20	.12	.00	.05	.23	.14	.27	.24	.10	.08	.24	.11	.02	.15	.03	.25	.77	1.0	.51	.17	.50	.22	.17	.25	.24	.32	.39	.21	.42	.23	.30	.38	.03
7.2	.19	.01	.08	.12	.08	.01	.03	.12	.12	.15	.11	.06	.03	.19	.08	.04	.10	.01	.16	.77	.51	1.0	.11	.32	.14	.06	.08	.14	.20	.27	.16	.29	.13	.23	.26	-.02
7.3	.10	.02	.06	.11	.05	-.02	.01	.20	.03	.07	.06	.03	.04	.05	.03	.01	.04	.02	.09	.39	.17	.11	1.0	.29	.57	.05	.09	.12	.12	.09	.06	.12	.07	.08	.13	^0.00
7.4	.25	.03	.14	.17	.11	.02	.04	.20	.08	.21	.18	.08	.07	.19	.10	.02	.14	.03	.22	.66	.50	.32	.29	1.0	.41	.26	.26	.19	.23	.30	.21	.33	.20	.23	.30	.02
7.5	.15	.01	.08	.12	.05	.00	.01	.21	.06	.09	.07	.04	.04	.06	.07	.03	.09	.02	.11	.45	.22	.14	.57	.41	1.0	.08	.16	.18	.12	.12	.08	.19	.11	.14	.17	^0.00
7.6	.11	.03	.07	.08	.05	.00	.01	.10	.02	.13	.11	.06	.05	.07	.03	.00	.04	.03	.13	.26	.17	.06	.05	.26	.08	1.0	.23	.12	.09	.16	.07	.13	.07	.04	.16	.09
7.7	.15	.06	.09	.10	.08	-.01	.02	.12	.03	.17	.14	.08	.09	.10	.08	.03	.08	.07	.16	.31	.25	.08	.09	.26	.16	.23	1.0	.15	.11	.20	.20	.19	.13	.11	.18	.09
7.8	.12	.02	.11	.11	.08	.04	.02	.09	.05	.19	.17	.09	.05	.11	.12	.01	.17	.05	.19	.38	.24	.14	.12	.19	.18	.12	.15	1.0	.14	.17	.09	.25	.09	.17	.25	^0.01

Table C.3

Correlations among feelings and dichotomies on official tourism websites

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
1	.71	.73	.23	.22	.02	.23	.23	.06	.13	.48	.19	.67	.17	.69	.54	.37	.57	.58	.40	.37	.43	.62	.33	.80	.16	.68	.86	.36	.42	.72	.68	.40	.28
2	1.0	.63	.45	.16	.08	.19	.17	.06	.36	.31	.26	.52	.21	.54	.56	.42	.51	.50	.34	.27	.43	.44	.42	.58	.13	.51	.61	.33	.30	.63	.42	.27	.28
3	.63	1.0	.32	.50	.15	.48	.22	.40	.19	.68	.33	.70	.13	.51	.45	.32	.51	.54	.34	.42	.28	.52	.33	.62	.10	.49	.59	.46	.34	.56	.45	.31	.26
4	.45	.32	1.0	.02	.00	.04	.00	.00	.59	.03	.16	.12	.14	.21	.43	.43	.25	.10	.22	.06	.04	.08	.44	.17	.00	.16	.14	.08	.02	.29	.04	.10	.19
5	.16	.50	.02	1.0	.39	.93	.08	.97	.01	.78	.50	.54	.05	.18	.12	.12	.14	.12	.15	.49	.10	.13	.07	.18	.02	.14	.22	.04	.17	.28	.16	.25	.13
6	.08	.15	.00	.39	1.0	.37	.01	.39	.00	.30	.19	.17	.12	.02	.04	.02	.05	.03	.03	.17	.00	.03	.01	.04	.15	.07	.03	.00	.04	.06	.01	.07	.03
7	.19	.48	.04	.93	.37	1.0	.09	.93	.03	.81	.48	.54	.05	.21	.14	.12	.22	.18	.15	.50	.08	.22	.10	.25	.01	.18	.25	.14	.25	.24	.23	.26	.14
8	.17	.22	.00	.08	.01	.09	1.0	.04	.00	.07	.02	.14	.00	.07	.10	.04	.00	.47	.05	.06	.06	.07	.09	.08	.00	.07	.13	.06	.00	.17	.06	.04	.02
9	.06	.40	.00	.97	.39	.93	.04	1.0	.00	.75	.48	.47	.03	.08	.03	.06	.09	.07	.09	.45	.02	.08	.02	.08	.01	.06	.08	.07	.13	.13	.06	.18	.09
10	.36	.19	.59	.01	.00	.03	.00	.00	1.0	.02	.42	.10	.12	.13	.36	.43	.33	.15	.23	.04	.03	.06	.37	.11	.00	.10	.04	.05	.00	.24	.01	.05	.16
11	.31	.68	.03	.78	.30	.81	.07	.75	.02	1.0	.40	.72	.04	.40	.21	.15	.43	.40	.26	.61	.07	.59	.15	.52	.05	.40	.40	.46	.41	.30	.40	.34	.20
12	.26	.33	.16	.50	.19	.48	.02	.48	.42	.40	1.0	.36	.11	.18	.22	.27	.32	.18	.16	.26	.02	.10	.26	.21	.14	.20	.19	.02	.08	.21	.14	.16	.12
13	.52	.70	.12	.54	.17	.54	.14	.47	.10	.72	.36	1.0	.16	.44	.38	.26	.49	.51	.38	.41	.39	.52	.17	.60	.09	.55	.58	.48	.39	.54	.53	.33	.28
14	.21	.13	.14	.05	.12	.05	.00	.03	.12	.04	.11	.16	1.0	.11	.14	.12	.12	.04	.06	.05	.23	.04	.16	.12	.08	.10	.14	.01	.01	.27	.09	.07	.07
16	.54	.51	.21	.18	.02	.21	.07	.08	.13	.40	.18	.44	.11	1.0	.45	.34	.53	.39	.28	.35	.18	.50	.31	.56	.17	.46	.58	.26	.37	.50	.49	.28	.19
15	.56	.45	.43	.12	.04	.14	.10	.03	.36	.21	.22	.38	.14	.45	1.0	.38	.45	.36	.30	.18	.19	.24	.43	.46	.20	.42	.52	.22	.36	.49	.40	.15	.44
17	.42	.32	.43	.12	.02	.12	.04	.06	.43	.15	.27	.26	.12	.34	.38	1.0	.49	.25	.25	.18	.10	.19	.32	.30	.11	.20	.31	.11	.12	.43	.23	.18	.18
18	.51	.51	.25	.14	.05	.22	.00	.09	.33	.43	.32	.49	.12	.53	.45	.49	1.0	.48	.28	.29	.08	.55	.35	.62	.22	.56	.50	.46	.42	.43	.59	.31	.25
19	.50	.54	.10	.12	.03	.18	.47	.07	.15	.40	.18	.51	.04	.39	.36	.25	.48	1.0	.42	.15	.17	.48	.21	.56	.14	.53	.53	.57	.35	.40	.46	.17	.20
20	.34	.34	.22	.15	.03	.15	.05	.09	.23	.26	.16	.38	.06	.28	.30	.25	.28	.42	1.0	.12	.19	.22	.13	.33	.06	.26	.35	.15	.17	.37	.24	.18	.22
21	.27	.42	.06	.49	.17	.50	.06	.45	.04	.61	.26	.41	.05	.35	.18	.18	.29	.15	.12	1.0	.03	.46	.14	.40	.03	.24	.29	.12	.23	.21	.21	.26	.13
22	.43	.28	.04	.10	.00	.08	.06	.02	.03	.07	.02	.39	.23	.18	.19	.10	.08	.17	.19	.03	1.0	.08	.02	.29	.03	.28	.37	.08	.17	.51	.29	.08	.08
23	.44	.52	.08	.13	.03	.22	.07	.08	.06	.59	.10	.52	.04	.50	.24	.19	.55	.48	.22	.46	.08	1.0	.22	.64	.05	.52	.48	.57	.41	.29	.52	.28	.16
24	.42	.33	.44	.07	.01	.10	.09	.02	.37	.15	.26	.17	.16	.31	.43	.32	.35	.21	.13	.14	.02	.22	1.0	.29	.12	.27	.27	.07	.07	.35	.22	.17	.19
25	.58	.62	.17	.18	.04	.25	.08	.08	.11	.52	.21	.60	.12	.56	.46	.30	.62	.56	.33	.40	.29	.64	.29	1.0	.26	.76	.72	.49	.58	.53	.76	.36	.37
26	.13	.10	.00	.02	.15	.01	.00	.01	.00	.05	.14	.09	.08	.17	.20	.11	.22	.14	.06	.03	.03	.05	.12	.26	1.0	.29	.17	.03	.16	.16	.19	.03	.20
27	.51	.49	.16	.14	.07	.18	.07	.06	.10	.40	.20	.55	.10	.46	.42	.20	.56	.53	.26	.24	.28	.52	.27	.76	.29	1.0	.68	.43	.54	.45	.72	.30	.29
28	.61	.59	.14	.22	.03	.25	.13	.08	.04	.40	.19	.58	.14	.58	.52	.31	.50	.53	.35	.29	.37	.48	.27	.72	.17	.68	1.0	.30	.40	.67	.64	.47	.25
29	.33	.46	.08	.04	.00	.14	.06	.07	.05	.46	.02	.48	.01	.26	.22	.11	.46	.57	.15	.12	.08	.57	.07	.49	.03	.43	.30	1.0	.41	.13	.39	.12	.15
30	.30	.34	.02	.17	.04	.25	.00	.13	.00	.41	.08	.39	.01	.37	.36	.12	.42	.35	.17	.23	.17	.41	.07	.58	.16	.54	.40	.41	1.0	.21	.58	.17	.34
31	.63	.56	.29	.28	.06	.24	.17	.13	.24	.30	.21	.54	.27	.50	.49	.43	.43	.40	.37	.21	.51	.29	.35	.53	.16	.45	.67	.13	.21	1.0	.47	.26	.22
32	.42	.45	.04	.16	.01	.23	.06	.06	.01	.40	.14	.53	.09	.49	.40	.23	.59	.46	.24	.21	.29	.52	.22	.76	.19	.72	.64	.39	.58	.47	1.0	.25	.24
33	.27	.31	.10	.25	.07	.26	.04	.18	.05	.34	.16	.33	.07	.28	.15	.18	.31	.17	.18	.26	.08	.28	.17	.36	.03	.30	.47	.12	.17	.26	.25	1.0	.24
34	.28	.26	.19	.13	.03	.14	.02	.09	.16	.20	.12	.28	.07	.19	.44	.18	.25	.20	.22	.13	.08	.16	.19	.37	.20	.29	.25	.15	.34	.22	.24	.24	1.0

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) ⁿ : Not significant

The rest of Correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). (Highest correlations in bold).

Database: 3,124 (966,800 words) files in English

Table C.4

Correlations among feelings and dichotomies in travel blogs and reviews

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
1	.64	.49	.19	.60	.13	.36	.13	.22	.03	.64	.24	.25	.20	.27	.32	.15	.34	.24	.21	.22	.21	.44	.17	.34	.16	.37	.35	.26	.22	.27	.17	.19	.21
2	1.0	.36	.20	.32	.21	.27	.16	.11	.05	.49	.29	.19	.19	.26	.31	.16	.31	.20	.24	.16	.24	.37	.20	.29	.18	.32	.30	.23	.20	.34	.14	.16	.28
3	.36	1.0	.18	.28	.08	.17	.12	.10	*.01	.31	.13	.14	.11	.16	.17	.08	.17	.11	.12	.10	.11	.21	.10	.21	.08	.21	.17	.12	.11	.15	.09	.08	.12
4	.20	.18	1.0	.09	.05	.08	.04	.05	.02	.12	.08	.06	.03	.06	.10	.04	.09	.03	.05	.04	.07	.11	.04	.09	.04	.12	.10	.05	.06	.09	.04	.04	.08
5	.32	.28	.09	1.0	.09	.26	.08	.09	.04	.29	.11	.17	.12	.20	.17	.08	.21	.11	.10	.13	.15	.24	.10	.21	.09	.23	.25	.13	.11	.16	.15	.10	.09
6	.21	.08	.05	.09	1.0	.07	.05	.04	.02	.09	.05	.05	.04	.07	.09	.04	.09	.05	.04	.04	.05	.07	.06	.09	.04	.07	.09	.07	.02	.08	.04	.04	.08
7	.27	.17	.08	.26	.07	1.0	.07	.10	.03	.24	.09	.14	.12	.14	.17	.09	.17	.10	.11	.13	.11	.20	.09	.17	.08	.17	.19	.15	.10	.15	.10	.07	.09
8	.16	.12	.04	.08	.05	.07	1.0	.03	.01	.09	.06	.05	.03	.06	.08	.03	.08	.03	.06	.05	.07	.08	.03	.07	.04	.08	.07	.05	.07	.06	.04	.02	.08
9	.11	.10	.05	.09	.04	.10	.03	1.0	.03	.12	.04	.08	.03	.07	.07	.03	.07	.04	.03	.07	.04	.09	.04	.06	.03	.08	.07	.06	.04	.08	.03	.07	.06
10	.05	.01	.02	.04	.02	.03	.01	.03	1.0	*.01	.05	.03	ⁿ .00	ⁿ .01	.02	ⁿ .00	.03	*.01	ⁿ .01	*.01	.02	.02	ⁿ .00	*.01	*.01	.02	ⁿ .01	*.01	.04	.07	ⁿ .01	.02	.02
11	.49	.31	.12	.29	.09	.24	.09	.12	.01	1.0	.18	.16	.14	.18	.24	.10	.25	.18	.15	.11	.13	.32	.12	.24	.12	.25	.23	.17	.16	.17	.11	.11	.14
12	.29	.13	.08	.11	.05	.09	.06	.04	.05	.18	1.0	.07	.08	.12	.10	.08	.14	.09	.08	.09	.08	.13	.09	.11	.08	.13	.12	.08	.07	.12	.04	.07	.09
13	.19	.14	.06	.17	.05	.14	.05	.08	.03	.16	.07	1.0	.09	.12	.15	.07	.19	.06	.10	.07	.11	.12	.06	.15	.05	.15	.14	.08	.06	.12	.10	.06	.08
14	.19	.11	.03	.12	.04	.12	.03	.03	.00	.14	.08	.09	1.0	.09	.09	.06	.13	.07	.07	.07	.07	.11	.04	.10	.07	.11	.11	.08	.07	.09	.04	.03	.06
16	.26	.16	.06	.20	.07	.14	.06	.07	.01	.18	.12	.12	.09	1.0	.18	.11	.20	.08	.09	.09	.10	.17	.09	.13	.06	.16	.18	.09	.06	.13	.09	.09	.08
15	.31	.17	.10	.17	.09	.17	.08	.07	.02	.24	.10	.15	.09	.18	1.0	.08	.25	.10	.10	.10	.10	.20	.08	.14	.08	.16	.16	.12	.10	.16	.09	.08	.14
17	.16	.08	.04	.08	.04	.09	.03	.03	.00	.10	.08	.07	.06	.11	.08	1.0	.11	.07	.07	.04	.07	.10	.06	.10	.05	.12	.10	.11	.11	.07	.04	.05	.08
18	.31	.17	.09	.21	.09	.17	.08	.07	.03	.25	.14	.19	.13	.20	.25	.11	1.0	.09	.14	.11	.12	.20	.09	.17	.07	.17	.19	.13	.12	.15	.09	.10	.13
19	.20	.11	.03	.11	.05	.10	.03	.04	.01	.18	.09	.06	.07	.08	.10	.07	.09	1.0	.09	.08	.08	.13	.06	.11	.04	.09	.10	.08	.06	.08	.05	.05	.07
20	.24	.12	.05	.10	.04	.11	.06	.03	.01	.15	.08	.10	.07	.09	.10	.07	.14	.09	1.0	.09	.08	.13	.07	.10	.07	.10	.12	.07	.06	.09	.05	.10	
21	.16	.10	.04	.13	.04	.13	.05	.07	.01	.11	.09	.07	.07	.09	.10	.04	.11	.08	.09	1.0	.10	.12	.06	.10	.06	.12	.14	.09	.07	.12	.05	.09	.09
22	.24	.11	.07	.15	.05	.11	.07	.04	.02	.13	.08	.11	.07	.10	.10	.07	.12	.08	.08	.10	1.0	.11	.05	.11	.07	.13	.11	.08	.08	.12	.07	.05	.08
23	.37	.21	.11	.24	.07	.20	.08	.09	.02	.32	.13	.12	.11	.17	.20	.10	.20	.13	.13	.12	.11	1.0	.11	.20	.09	.21	.19	.13	.11	.15	.09	.10	.13
24	.20	.10	.04	.10	.06	.09	.03	.04	.00	.12	.09	.06	.04	.09	.08	.06	.09	.06	.07	.06	.05	.11	1.0	.11	.05	.09	.08	.05	.04	.12	.06	.06	.08
25	.29	.21	.09	.21	.09	.17	.07	.06	.01	.24	.11	.15	.10	.13	.14	.10	.17	.11	.10	.10	.11	.20	.11	1.0	.11	.22	.19	.15	.10	.17	.13	.09	.13
26	.18	.08	.04	.09	.04	.08	.04	.03	.01	.12	.08	.05	.07	.06	.08	.05	.07	.04	.07	.06	.07	.09	.05	.11	1.0	.10	.08	.08	.07	.10	.05	.03	.08
27	.32	.21	.12	.23	.07	.17	.08	.08	.02	.25	.13	.15	.11	.16	.16	.12	.17	.09	.10	.12	.13	.21	.09	.22	.10	1.0	.30	.14	.12	.17	.17	.09	.13
28	.30	.17	.10	.25	.09	.19	.07	.07	.01	.23	.12	.14	.11	.18	.16	.10	.19	.10	.12	.14	.11	.19	.08	.19	.08	.30	1.0	.11	.08	.14	.12	.09	.10
29	.23	.12	.05	.13	.07	.15	.05	.06	.01	.17	.08	.08	.08	.09	.12	.11	.13	.08	.07	.09	.08	.13	.05	.15	.08	.14	.11	1.0	.18	.12	.10	.09	.08
30	.20	.11	.06	.11	.02	.10	.07	.04	.04	.16	.07	.06	.07	.06	.10	.11	.12	.06	.06	.07	.08	.11	.04	.10	.07	.12	.08	.18	1.0	.10	.10	.06	.07
31	.34	.15	.09	.16	.08	.15	.06	.08	.07	.17	.12	.12	.09	.13	.16	.07	.15	.08	.09	.12	.12	.15	.12	.17	.10	.17	.14	.12	.10	1.0	.10	.09	.15
32	.14	.09	.04	.15	.04	.10	.04	.03	.01	.11	.04	.10	.04	.09	.09	.04	.09	.05	.09	.05	.07	.09	.06	.13	.05	.17	.12	.10	.10	.10	1.0	.06	.06
33	.16	.08	.04	.10	.04	.07	.02	.07	.02	.11	.07	.06	.03	.09	.08	.05	.10	.05	.05	.09	.05	.10	.06	.09	.03	.09	.09	.09	.06	.09	.06	1.0	.17
34	.28	.12	.08	.09	.08	.09	.08	.06	.02	.14	.09	.08	.06	.08	.14	.08	.13	.07	.10	.09	.08	.13	.08	.13	.08	.13	.10	.08	.07	.15	.06	.17	1.0

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) ⁿ: Not significant

The rest of correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). (Highest correlations in bold).

Database: 25,357 (2,791,800 words) files in English

This thesis aims to explore online projected and perceived images of a tourist destination, to assess their mutual correspondence, and to shed light on the role of online user-generated images in destination image formation. It also seeks to analyse the spatial distribution of image by tourists and the complex image identity issues concerning a destination. To achieve this, online image sources regarding the case study of Catalonia were analysed through massive computerized quantitative content analysis of some 25,000 travel blog and review entries (perceived image) and around 3,000 official tourism webpages (projected image). The results showed significant dissonance between tourists' images and official images of the destination in several aspects, notably its attraction factors and cultural identity. Tourists' destination images were found to be greatly concentrated on certain elements and spaces. Finally, this thesis proposes the concept of "transmitted image" to reflect the new central role of tourists' online images in the creation, dissemination and formation of destination image.

Keywords: tourist destination image; destination identity; online image; perceived image; projected image; transmitted image; travel blog; travel review; official tourism websites; Web 2.0; quantitative content analysis; Catalonia

